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ABSTRACT

This report is one of six to be released by as many task forces on educational improvement and reform. The main body of this report consists of five sections: (a) an introduction, which briefly describes the work of the task force; (b) a description of the alternative of community participation in education; (c) recommendations; (d) access to information; and (e) training recommendations. The task force takes the position that as long as education is left to the professional educators who maintain the status quo, there will be no real change and that "reform" will leave those who are outside the mainstream of American education and life as victimized as ever. To involve the community, the task force recommends a change in the system of information dissemination and the training of local community members in analysis of both information and the needs of the community. The new information dissemination to the community would be through ERIC and through Community Information Offices (COIs), each of which would serve as a check on the effectiveness of the other and, in combination, would assure that information reached the local level in a timely fashion. The report includes examples of 12 modules to be used in training active community members in information flow, analysis, and usage. The report has nine appendixes. (HMD)

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A REAL ALTERNATIVE:

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The Final Report and Recommendations of the
COMMUNITY
NATIONAL FIELD TASK FORCE
on the
IMPROVEMENT AND REFORM OF AMERICAN EDUCATION

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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In 1972 the U.S. Office of Education funded six independent National Field Task Forces on the Improvement and Reform of American Education. The names of these task forces are:

Administration and Supervision
Basic Studies
Council of Chief State School Officers
Higher Education
National Community
Teacher

This publication presents the final report and recommendations of the National Community Task Force. Reports and recommendations of the other task forces are published separately. These reports and recommendations do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Office of Education, and no official endorsement by the U.S. Office of Education should be inferred.

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In its continuing effort to develop programs which are more responsive to local needs, the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Systems of the U.S. Office of Education (OE) established six field task forces in early 1972 to contribute directly to its intensified efforts to help improve the Nation's school systems and the preparation of the people who staff them. These new groups, appropriately called the Field Task Forces on Improvement and Reform of American Education, represented a major commitment by the OE to involve people, institutions, and organizations in a continuing appraisal of its existing national training programs and in the development of alternative program strategies.

The creation of the Field Task Forces was a significant step in OE's efforts to build more effective mechanisms for utilizing the best of the wisdom and experience of its funded training projects and persons on the educational firing line. This particular effort built strongly on the work of Task Force 72,[1] under the leadership of Dr. Allen Schmieder, which directly involved the contributions of over 10,000 educators in the development of its reports and recommendations.

The Field Task Forces brought together a national cross-section of pacesetters from the major constituencies of American education--teachers, State education departments, the community, school administration and supervision, higher education, and spokesmen for the basic subjects taught in the schools--for a 6-month analysis of the key concepts underlying current training program policies, and more importantly, to help develop more effective means for achieving systematic educational improvement and reform. It is hoped that this important intensive task force effort will provide some models for a more systematic and continuing dialogue between Washington, the Regions, and the American and international community regarding the formulation and implementation of national educational training policy.

The need for and desirability of such Windows to the Bureaucracy[2] is reflected in the enthusiastic response from the Nation to this call to

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[1]A task force organized in early 1971 by the former Bureau of Educational Personnel Development (later National Center for the Improvement of Educational Systems and now the Division of Educational Systems Development, Bureau of Occupational and Adult Education) to examine the implications of training complexes, protocol and training materials, the OE-commissioned Elementary Teacher Training Models, and competency-based teacher education for educational reform and for future programing affecting educational personnel.

[2]The title of a publication of the National Advisory Council of Education Professions Development which calls for a much greater involvement of people in the field in the development of national education program policy.

action. The Task Forces, whose members were nominated by a wide range of education personnel and groups from OE-sponsored programs and projects, included representatives from organizations which collectively have several million members. All major geographic regions and almost all racial and ethnic groups were represented in a rich variety of personnel embracing such committed leaders as the White House Teacher of the Year, the President of the American Counseling and Guidance Association, the Chairman of the National Conference on English Education, the head of the Black Caucus of the National Education Association, the Director of the Education Division of the National Conservation Foundation, the President of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the Leadership Training Institute Directors, and the Director of the Schools Division of the National Science Foundation. In the Field Task Forces, too, were to be found classroom teachers, parents, community activists, administrators, and others without formal title who by their involvement in training projects displayed a heavy personal stake and a deep-seated commitment to change.

But all of the members who formed vested interest group concerns were selected in the hope that their recommendations would reflect their personal wisdom as well as the best of the training program viewpoints and policies of their groups.

The Task Forces had three major purposes: (1) to make recommendations regarding how best to use discretionary training funds for the improvement of the quality of American education, (2) to help develop specific training strategies for the improvement of educational systems through more effective development of educational personnel, and (3) to show the way to a more effective communication system between the national Federal offices, regional offices, State offices and their constituencies.

The Field Task Forces completed their respective studies in the Fall of 1973. Their reports and recommendations reflect their reactions to the state of improvement and reform in American education as it existed at that time. Many changes have occurred since then--as a result of steps taken by the Administration, by the Congress, and by the educational community. Although some of this material is therefore necessarily dated, so much of it is still current and useful that I feel that these reports will prove valuable not only today but in the future. Although they do not necessarily reflect OE positions and policies, they contain the opinions of knowledgeable and dedicated men and women. With this in mind, I commend them to you most earnestly.

Washington, D.C.
May 1974

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CONTENTS

Foreword		v
I.	Introduction--A Group at the Gate	1
II.	A Real Alternative	3
III.	Recommendations	19
IV.	Access to Information	21
V.	Training Recommendations	27
Notes		39
Appendixes		
A.	The Method in the Madness	41
B.	The Community: A Changing Coalition of the Groups Outside "The System"	53
C.	Objectives Presented to Summer Institute in Tampa	59
D.	The National Community Field Task Force Policy Statement	61
E.	Rationale for a Communerama and Community Task Force Report System	63
F.	Videotape Guide	67
G.	New Local Advisory Boards and Councils	69
H.	Management Processes for Effecting Change	75
I.	Polling Members of the Community Task Force	77

I. INTRODUCTION--A GROUP AT THE GATE

Schools and formal learning centers have always been concerned with people, materials, places, and experiences. But today's questions have a special twist: what materials, what places, what experiences, and what people? There are nagging questions about the products of the educational experience, the students, their parents, and the educational system itself. Questions are asked in a context that forces recognition of the fact that schools have soon to begin either to "put up or shut up."

The circumstances of our time are forcing all of us who are concerned with education either willingly or unwillingly to develop schools, knowledge, insights and attitudes to improve the capacities of the end product of the educational process--the learners. There have been warnings before, protests, shouts, curses and demonstrations as the ill-served and poorly served have turned up the volume of their discontent. There have been reports and eloquent statements capturing the hopes and frustrations of those discontented with present educational processes. Protest has taken several forms:

* Demands for community control of schools,
* Taxpayer revolts,
* A growing loss of confidence in the ability of legislators, school boards and educators to heal the ills of the school systems,
* Student demonstrations and other manifestations of student unrest, and
* Increasing student demands for social justice.

Citizens' warnings and protests have led to three types of reactions from the educational community: 1) it has ignored the warnings and protests; 2) it has provided token enforcement through one or two persons or through advisory boards; or 3) it has made an honest effort to enter into a true partnership with citizens.

Another group is again at the gate presenting another report about organizational and procedural deficits and presenting still more data and volunteering another set of recommendations. Called the National Community Field Task Force, it represents that large group of citizens who are the consumers of education. Historically, citizens have been planned for rather than with. Citizens have been the subjects of research, but they have been researched without having any power to influence research results, and they have been forced into remedial type programs that were designed with little or no respect for their expectations, values, or

feelings. The concept of including citizens in the entire process simply because they are the consumers is a reality of our times that must be accepted and responded to.

If this Task Force has accomplished anything at all, it has clearly demonstrated that a true partnership is both beneficial and productive. A true partnership should emerge from contacts with the community. The fact that the Task Force recognizes that this is not a simple task is evident in their insightful recommendations. Their knowledge that citizen participation is difficult is further evidenced by their insistence that training is a must if citizens are to cope positively with the political, technical, and leadership complexities of school life.

This is a very reasonable goal, one that is not new to the educational community. Before the educational community can achieve quality, before it can expand the life opportunities and options of the teachers, students, and community folk, it must have a reliable data base and knowledge about the expectations of the families of the children requiring services. The educational community must have a system that seeks data and it must want to use the data, information and the evaluation which emerges.

If the Task Force has made demands, those demands are clearly for participation in the preliminary and ongoing processes that lead to the decisions about those processes. The Task Force wishes everyone to be aware of kinds of involvement they anticipate and insist upon: needs assessment; establishment of goals; creating specific objectives; devising cognitive, psychomotor, and affective experiences to implement the objectives; implementation of the objectives; and data gathering to uphold the success or failure of the project.

The Task Force findings and recommendations are not farfetched; they are in line with a number of experiences around the country. The reader's attention is drawn to the efforts and nonthreatening atmosphere created in California's field testing of the processes and products of community involvement as reported in the October 1972 Phi Beta Kappan by Carroll A. Lang and B. Keith Rose. This report further validates each of the processes and products of this Task Force's effort to deal with consumer needs in education.

II. A REAL ALTERNATIVE

The National Community Field Task Force was established early in 1972 to provide the education community with data, information, and insight which might assist the National Center for the Improvement of Educational Systems (NCIES) in more effective pursuit of a mission to ensure change and improvement of school systems throughout the Nation, and to foster development of skills, knowledge, professional capacities, and positive attitudes of the personnel who operate the Nation's schools.

Members of the Community Task Force were selected to represent varied backgrounds with wide pragmatic experience in Federal, State, and local educational improvement efforts. Drawn from almost every geographic section of this land, the Task Force members include men and women, urban and rural representatives, laymen and professionals, college students and college graduates, Chicanos and Anglos, Ph.D.s and persons with no degrees, parents and teachers, and the young and matured. Many ethnic groups are represented; the Task Force membership included five basic colorations--black, brown, red, white, and yellow--and three language groups--English, Spanish, and Chinese.

The composition of the Community Task Force gives rich testament to the diversity of American families. The wide spectrum of interests, skills, and backgrounds of the members also reflects the range among persons concerned about improvement in schools, particularly those who are becoming increasingly aware that mere improvement (more and better of the same) is simply not sufficient for these times.

The Task Force mirrors parent groups, local groups and persons unaffiliated with institutions, activists, dissident professionals, and the minority groups who exist largely outside the current mainstream of education. As an operating unit, the Task Force tried to be a model of "community participation" in action on a national level, setting an example of the manner in which groups in a pluralistic society might relate to one another in a healthy, constructive way, and addressing itself to a major national concern: the provision of quality education (see Appendix A).

Several crucial experiences taught this Task Force some of the realities and difficulties that permeate efforts to bring about change; these included:

* Many people within the American education scene believe there is nothing wrong with the form and fabric of American education, objective evidence notwithstanding.

* Among large segments of the dominant institutional groups, the lay citizen, the minority group person, and the critics of the status quo are viewed as outsiders without portfolio, incapable of either the capacity for accurate observation or the capability of making a meaningful input into considerations about education.

* All but a few of the most emphatic educators perceive traditional processes and procedures as almost immutable and thus rarely question their true impact.

As a result, educators, school systems, and the persons operating within the context of existing systems who have traditional outlooks induced by practice, adherence, and rewards, may be aware of what they try to do for people only in educational terms of what their actions in fact do to people.

The Task Force was able to learn that the main issues in the efforts to influence American education are not merely questions of the improvement of educational systems or questions of better training for school personnel. More fundamental concerns are in fact being surfaced. For example,

* Do educational professionals really wish to have full information and data necessary to make planning and control decisions?

* Do professionals really know the best way to improve, to reform, or to revitalize human service systems in education?

These and similar fundamental questions require serious consideration.

As these basic questions have emerged, educators and their spokesmen have sought to divert attention from the basic issues involved by questioning the legitimacy of the notion of "community."

Therefore, the Task Force recognizes that its premises and its views about what must change are decidedly different from the premises and views of those within the educational system. For this, the Task Force makes no apology. The oppressed and the oppressor seldom agree about the nature of oppression, its impact, or the timetable for its end.

The Task Force believes that no change or improvement is possible in public education without actually involving the consumer in the change process--the student, his family, and the adults of the neighborhood (the local taxpayers). The consumer must be involved not merely in the choice of alternatives, but also in the determination and the clarification of goals and objectives, and in the monitoring and evaluating of the processes and the procedures, as well as in the implementing of the programs.

Consumer involvement in all these phases is necessitated by the simple fact that the organizational system of checks and balances in schools has become distorted at some point in the process in favor of control. A better balance must be struck between the controllers of the system and those who are served by it. This change is not just a matter of justice; it is a matter of necessity if the educational system is to provide efficient humane services.

To achieve its objectives of community involvement in educational decisionmaking, the Task Force does not offer a high-impact/low probability programatic approach. The Task Force believes that it is plainly imperative that a special and guaranteed approach be found to provide effective participation for groups, minority and lay, who are now deliberately or inadvertently excluded.

It should be clearly understood that although the barriers to participation have been most strongly erected against minorities, many of the so-called majority groups are also effectively barred from making important decisions about their own lives and those of their children. These majority groups apparently believe either that the system does not respond to them or that its functionaries will look out for their interests. If these majority groups discover the error of these beliefs, conflict could spread and cross color and socioeconomic lines.

In its recommendations with respect to training and information, the Task Force is well within the context of present legislation. Moreover, it is within the present resource capability of the Office of Education to act on these recommendations. However, the recommendations do require changes in priorities and OE to consciously seek new information on programs. These recommendations should be seen as initial steps which provide all the other Task Forces with a new kind of forum and an entirely new milieu for the educational change process. In addition, this proposal provides for OE the potential to secure invaluable program data.

In presenting this report, the Task Force is well aware that it gives the Office of Education a difficult choice. The choice is between the Task Force's view and approach to the revitalization of a human service system and the elitist top/downward model of change, characteristic of bureaucracies. It is a choice between different concepts of educational governance. On the one hand, there is the proposal for leadership by the professional institutions so that they can continue to function as a closed system. The Community Task Force, on the other hand, suggests that education ought to reflect a system that is indeed of the people, by the people, and for the people.

The Urgent Necessity for Sweeping Change

In preparing this final report, the members of the National Community Field Task Force were faced with a number of problems and challenges in articulating their position. Not only were some of the concepts, such as "participation," subject to confusion but "community" as a notion was subject to misunderstanding and misinterpretation. In addition, the three basic premises of the Task Force may trouble persons who now see themselves as friends of the notion of community. Yet, the very effort of setting down its experiences, its notions, and recommendations must crystallize for all people the major educational issue facing the American community: Will this Nation's educational system service all the children and adults of this land?

The recommendation section which follows can be perceived in terms of fundamental problems and issues about community and in terms of the basic premises agreed upon by the Task Force. Recommendations for training and an information system emerge from the actual work and deliberations of the Task Force.

The Task Force is trying to communicate the simple fact that there is a necessity and urgency for change, not reform, in American education:

1. Change in School Governance--to include members of ethnic and racial minorities in a new kind of social fabric;

2. Change in the Character and Quality of Educational Goals and Objectives--to make them explicit;

3. Change in Methods and Teaching Techniques--to include the contributions of all people, noncredentialled as well as credentialled, organized into new units;

4. Change in the Mechanisms and Procedures--to provide access to information about schools, Federal programs and school systems to the community.

These changes are seen as the sine qua non of a new order for a new era. This society cannot hope to provide an effective education for the demands of tomorrow unless these changes are made. What this era demands is plainly not the preparation of teachers and other educational personnel for today's world but rather the preparation of all the people, young as well as old, for the world of tomorrow. This must be the mission and assignment of American education.

While it may have been challenging to the members of this Task Force to have to articulate their own notions, the real challenge of this report is to the Office of Education to develop, sponsor, and support systems and units that are interested in pursuing and developing effective, relevant, democratic education for a multiracial society and a multiracial world. In addition, a real challenge is posed for the American society at large--Which values are to be reflected in educational institutions? Freedom? Human development? Or control?

To continue the present system is to institutionalize the present inequities described by countless writers and research commissions.[1] Such inequities no longer only exploit and victimize the racial and ethnic minorities but also increasingly exploit and victimize the children of the various European subgroups in different degrees and on different levels.

To try to offer tepid half-hearted reforms to deal with the obvious and subtle inequities as well as the apparently systematic inadequacies of the educational fabric is in fact an attempt to mask repression under the guise of "reform." This approach, in the long run, just won't work.

Evidence abounds to support this Task Force's contention that the educational system is in fact now doing more <u>to</u> its victims than it does <u>for</u> its owners. The price to the owners may be found in the countless numbers of unemployed, underskilled youths of all colors; in the drug addicts; in the societal dropouts within the ranks of white youth; in the disparity between the skills of the unemployed and those required for available jobs, and in a host of other indicators. Only those who will benefit from the inequality in the present system can maintain that sweeping change is not urgently needed. The matter of change is a matter of urgency. To delay and to temporize in a technologically advanced era is to set the stage for a tyranny which will indeed transform the American Dream.

The available evidence suggests the accuracy and relevance of a popular song:

"Time waits for no man, and we're running out of time."

<u>Community: A Real Alternative</u>

One of the recurring questions faced by advocates of increased community participation and involvement in educational decisionmaking and educational program implementation is the definition of the concept of "community." The National Community Field Task Force faced that question at every turn. It soon became clear that continued forcing of the definition

of the concept was indeed a code for rejection, resistance, and a gross unwillingness to give up yesteryear's liberal notions of universalism and its self-designated mission of rescuing American education from provincialism. Because the definition proposed by this Task Force is harsh on some of the sacred notions of the defenders and profiteers of the status quo is hardly a reason to reject the definition (see Appendix C). The organization and function for the Task Force offers ample evidence that a group representing and reflecting consumer groups can be mobilized, can visit and interview critics as well as defenders of the present system across this country, can amass data, and can participate in decisionmaking processes.

Key findings of the Task Force center around certain critical factors in lay involvement:

* Educational systems and institutions and their leaders have to want to know about community.

* Educational systems and institutions have to grow out of the habit of wishing to hide their shortcomings; they have to do something about them.

* Community groups should have access to technical help, advocate planners, and clerical as well as administrative assistance. Without such assistance, "participation" is just so much window dressing. More important, without such assistance, lay people are kept dependent on the establishment for "right answers" as well as for the "right questions."

The concept of community on the local level is less complex that on the national level because the groups and individuals outside the school system are located within smaller geographic areas. The concept of community as it relates to activity within education systems cannot effectively be confined within the limited conceptual parameters of traditional academic disciplines (economics, history, sociology, etc.) Nor can the concept of community be linked to solely ethnic, religious, or professional backgrounds for in the construction of any new enterprise, pigeonholing and narrow categorizing tend to frustrate the developing enterprise.

While the notion of community in some senses lacks legal status, the notion has reemerged today because of the increased sophistication of consumers and because of the recognition that human service systems do not necessarily meet the needs of racial minorities whose interests are either ignored or submerged. The question of legal status ignores a central feature of major change efforts--that many, if not most, change efforts come from outside the established order, especially when all other apertures are closed.

Advocates of the legalistic, rule-ridden approach to social conflict would do well to remember that our own American history has shown that people can endure tyranny as long as they are not degraded. But if a citizen has no way to make inputs and lacks recognition, he will sometimes adopt tactics of disruption.

As a counter to the politics of disruption, certain "divide-and-rule" techniques and manipulative tactics disrupt the emergence of true communal feelings, foiling the development of community participation. For example, labeling people and groups can create an air of distrust among the very people who should constitute a functioning human community. Once the groups have been labeled, community spirit has difficulty emerging. Perhaps the notion of "community" proves difficult to digest for the traditionalists because they do not control it and/or cannot develop a handle with which to manipulate that sector given the rewards and censures currently available to them.

The problem of definition of community is not insurmountable. Nor can the issue of definition be used as an excuse for inaction. The difficulty emerges from the emotional reactions and the power needs in response to the new, the unfamiliar, the foreign in their approach to education. The notion of community can offer adults a chance to try and test new relationships, to grow, to utilize new skills. As such, the concept of community presents a challenge; it gives people a chance to matter. It is not for the faint of heart, but neither is the future itself.

Participation for What?

Advocates of community participation are quick to acknowledge that the development of communities and participation is a means, not an end in itself. It is a means for pursuing the objective of quality education. Community participation may offer the community person, the student, as well as the educator--people from all walks of life who have something valuable to contribute—an opportunity to improve the educational system.

With the help of its Technical Assistants, the Task Force has developed this tentative list of Fourteen Signs of a Quality Education Program:

1. Student enthusiasm for the school programs, both curricular and extracurricular;

2. Proper facilities, equipment, and materials;

3. Properly certified and skilled teachers;

4. Clearly stated philosophy and educational objectives;

5. Continuous and planned program of communication;

6. Low percentage of absenteeism and low dropout rate;

7. Comprehensive and extensive curriculum;

8. Provision of career orientation which, in fact, leads to careers;

9. Improved, measurable academic achievement of the students;

10. High effort of the school district as it attempts minimum requirements and regulations;

11. Open decisionmaking process of the school;

12. Community-school educational program;

13. Comprehensive research and development program;

14. Staff development and growth programs.

These signs attest to the central focus of the Task Force. The visibility of these signs suggests that quality education is indeed an objective for all children.[2] The Task Force holds that these objectives are achievable--if there is the will and the effort to achieve them. The Task Force suggests that community participation can lead to identifiable change by pragmatic routes in school systems.

The Assumptional Base for Real Change

During the course of its analysis, the Task Force identified certain notions and concepts which seem to form the basis for the application of community participation-community involvement to the resolution of many of the problems confronting education today. Three primary premises seem to emerge from its considerations:

1. Public schools are owned by the community.

2. Schools' failures are systemic in origin and character. Contrary to popularly held dictum, these failures are not inherent in the children served by the schools.

3. The present educational enterprises are inadequate to serve the needs of the present and are totally irrelevant to the needs of the future. Thus, these enterprises must be changed.

Community Ownership

Throughout a considerable period of American history, the principle has been established that the function of public education should be delegated to the States. In accordance with State mandates, local governments carry out the actual task. Schools, then, belong to the public and are supported by public revenues. Staffs are supposed to be hired to carry out the public's will in education, not to make new rules without public knowledge as they are so often wont to do. Nor are they supposed to keep the school organization to themselves.

Over the years, the growth of complex educational organizations, the expansion of funds, and the emergence of competing, sometimes cooperating, interests have given rise to the assumption of real combat over process, goals, and procedures by the stewards of education. Educators, not unlike other public employees, have constructed private enclaves and fortresses for themselves from which they have controlled the flow of information, made overt policy decisions under the guise of administration, and directed the lives of students and adults. For the members of minority groups, and the poor who are often politically powerless and unable to make their dissatisfaction heard and felt, this condition of dominance by the stewards is fast becoming intolerable. In some instances, the situation is already intolerable.

Assertion of ownership and active direction by the community is not a usurpation of turf but rather a restatement of the willingness on the part of the people to play a genuine role in education. It is a role of importance without which the system of checks and balances is unworkable. Assertion of ownership is a direct answer and reminder to special interest groups and occupational groups who seek to make the schools responsive solely to their needs. Public schools just cannot be made a private preserve for either teachers, school administrators, universities, State school officers, or even for spokesmen from the community. The schools must become open, responsive to, and accountable to those who wish to use them, within, of course, the context of law and practical operational procedures. Indeed, the institutional and occupational grouping are frequently employees of a public lulled to sleep but now becoming increasingly aware that the Greyhound approach to the problem of travel is no real approach to the provision of quality education. (To wit, "Take the bus and leave the driving to us.")

If the main purpose of the school's existence is to provide quality education for all children, the school should be open to scrutiny by the general public and elements of the local community who may wish to view and review the system's stewardship. Being open-to-review is not a privilege granted by those in charge of school systems: It is a basic right of citizenship. School systems whose primary purpose for existence is that of facilitating and ensuring the provision of education for all children need to reassert the primacy of that purpose.

The community's assertion of ownership assumes a need for a greater flow of information about schools, a need for easier access to information about schools on the part of the people, and a need for more school consultation with the people than that which presently exists. Further, the community's assertion questions the present representative quality and functioning of local school boards as examples of citizen participation (see Appendix H).

It can be documented that school boards for the most part have been without adequate independent expertise. Many school boards can be shown to be ethnically, racially, or ideologically unrepresentative of the communities they purpose to serve. Still others are not responsive to or even sympathetic toward the lay citizenry. In fact, all too frequently nonwhite groups have been systematically excluded from activity on the boards. This exclusion is one indication of increasingly closed educational systems. In some cases, the very methods and criteria for nominating, selecting, or licensing school board members work to disenfranchise both the parents of the poor and the parents of the "different." Particularly in communities where the influx of these different people has been most numerous, present school board election patterns operate to maintain an underrepresentation of the newcomers. The subconscious sense of superiority of the white majority, when coupled with other attitudes of fear and antipathy to the "different," work to produce a pervasive and institutionalized form of discriminatory governance. Discriminatory governance systems seem to yield only to power, prestige, and decisive political action. Such systems seldom respond to reason.

In addition to the deficits which emerge from the operation of school boards, the school systems have learned to use new Federal programs and paraprofessional and school aides to protect the status quo. The system has learned to divert, to convert, to accommodate, to co-opt, and to placate community folk. The present manipulation of the community occurs frequently with State and Federal support.

In proposing a repossession of the schools by the community, the Task Force hopes to reverse the patterns of discrimination and exclusion. Therefore, the Task Force asks on behalf of local communities:

* the right and access to information,

* the right to be consulted,

* the right to participate in all information-gathering, problem-solving, monetarial, and policymaking processes involved in the educational enterprise.

To paraphrase Clemenceau, "Education is just too important to be left to the educators!"

School System Failure

"The attempt to relate prejudice to the specific nature of its object is a cunning projection of the prejudices of the dominant group, cunning because it passes as scientific curiosity. As long as the majority can pretend that the source of prejudice inheres in the nature of the victim, social action can be indefinitely postponed. There is always still another investigation which must be made."

Carey M. Williams,
Brothers Under the Skin

There are hosts of educators who maintain that American school systems are not failing. These "status quo-ers" are joined in this belief by many Americans. To this group, the experience of minority group people, the reports and findings of critics, and the angry shouts of some of the sensitive students are all as shouts in the wind. To this group of defenders and apologists, the problems in schools relate to and are caused by:

* The children themselves,

* The children's home lives, and

* The failure of parents and local neighborhoods to bring children and youth into responsible relationships with the social and work life of adults.

The fourth annual Gallup poll of Public Attitudes Toward Education offers data that these beliefs are held by a large segment of the American people.[3]

While the defenders of the status quo are quick to point out that home factors are important to school success, very little effort is given to the solution of this problem or to clarifying why the school has had so

little impact on the lives of children. What emerges from this national pattern of belief is what Howard Schuman has chosen to call "sociological racism."[4]

This habit of thought does not look deeply into the causes for inequality or for failures in this society, choosing instead to espouse a doctrine of free will and a naive perspective of race and institutional barriers to success. Americans, by and large, possess little conception of how heavily public institutions, values, and actions press down upon nonwhites and the poor. These public practices act to convince nonwhites and the poor that, no matter how great their efforts, they will not be rewarded in American society. As such, Americans just do not seem to realize or want to realize that free will operates and only provides benefits within specific institutional settings.

For its part, the National Community Field Task Force, categorically rejects the assumptions and the positions of those who will not acknowledge the failures of this educational system. (Unless, of course, the education system is supposed to assure the failure of nonwhites, the poor, the ethnically different, and the white dissidents.) Further, the Community Task Force strongly urges, even demands, that the notion that the current failures are due to the failure of the children be abandoned.

The National Community Task Force asserts that these failures are systemic. It is not lost on some observers that today's public schools and mental institutions seem to have some conceptual similarities. Ronald Fischer has pointed out that both these "healing-growing institutions intend maturity, learning and independent functioning. Their very ways seem to be in contradiction with their philosophy."[5] For nonwhites--Blacks, Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, Indians, Chinese, Japanese, Haitians--and all Third World people, the assaults seem less like accidents of poor organization than like cultural strategies of dominance.

No amount of speculation on the inadequacy of the individual, the failures of low-income families, the inadequacies of cultural life styles, the inadequacy of language, and the claim that some (nonwhites) are just not genetically endowed with sufficient intelligence seems to make sense, except as parts of strategies for blaming the victim. Rather the failure must be laid squarely at the feet of the system itself with its inadequate or nonexistent goals, its "penny-in-the-pocket" funding mentality, and its inadequate educational processes manned by people who often function like colonial overlords--bringing culture to the savages--or like the colonial functionaries whose overt and/or covert dictum is to keep the "undesirables out of the way."

The basic outlines of the system's failure are clear and may be characterized by the behavior of its personnel who man, perpetuate, and defend the system itself and propagandize the uninformed and frightened citizenry—thus knowingly or unknowingly further extending their own benefits within the system. These factors characterize the present unsatisfactory system.

1. Assumptions—implicitly assumes that all clients to be successful must be powerful, white and/or middle class and that all others should wish to emulate that group.

2. Language and behavior—has developed language and behavioral styles for both client and its personnel consistent with the needs for homogeneity of participants and the maintenance of dominance by the school organization.

3. Outside threats—deals with threats or challenges by exclusion, dilution and misconstruing viewpoints which challenge the exclusionary practices.

A system with these characteristics can hardly be expected to reform or to change itself in order to benefit those deemed unworthy, lazy, shiftless, or lacking in the will to work hard. It is this central fact which dooms most reform or change efforts from the outset, especially if those efforts are directed to work on powerless minority and dissident groups. The Task Force acknowledges that not all educational personnel are single-minded and aloof; some are, in fact, deeply concerned with the issues being raised. But even those who are concerned have been socialized by "the system," acting on explicit or implicit orders to sort and to distribute opportunity according to a formula specified by those who maintain a controlling interest in schools. From this relatively change resistant and sometimes oppressive system, it is difficult to learn the arts of freeing men through education and liberating their spirits as well as their minds. Thus, there is a need to join the community in the struggles rather than resist the reform effort through professional channels alone.

The Task Force points to the necessity for the involvement of totally new elements in any real effort to change schools. The community offers a wide diversity of people who, because of their own lives, possess many more chances to escape from the tropistic character of socialization by education.

<u>The reservoir of talents, both within and outside, should make it possible to develop a coalition of lay and professional people who wish to go beyond a definition of community to the more important work of revitalization and restructuring of American educational processes.</u> This re-

vitalization and restructuring are absolutely essential if school systems are to escape the advanced stages of self-congratulatory rigor mortis characteristic of many school systems.

Changing National and State Educational Practices

> "To think that federal funds will purchase change on behalf of the powerless and the poor through funding the present professional interest groups who continue to do the same old thing is to make a fundamental error."
>
> -- The National Community Task Force
> 1972

Modifying, redefining, and restructuring the current organization of American education calls for significant change in the outlooks, methods, and procedures on the national level. To believe that change can be brought about by national legislation administered unevenly is to confess to dangerous naivete. Such approaches to date have barely purchased temporary adjustment. But these temporary adjustments can hardly be considered permanent changes. In some measure, the temporary experimental quality of these innovations may have contributed to cynicism about the merit of widely heralded innovations which do not affect basic needs of schools and which do not change the learning process or the outcome for the learners.

The Task Force, from its experience, asserts that change in national and State educational practices demands that the Office of Education begin to redefine its real priorities, develop organizational mechanisms, and facilitate the change processes. What is needed is an operational redefinition and monitoring of community involvement itself as practiced in the Office of Education; the distribution of information, knowledge, and resources; a utilization within the Office of outside-the-system assistance from the communities to provide the Office of Education with new windows on the world.

More important, the Office must begin to ask itself, in the development of its advisory panels, whether it is willing to consent to advice and to follow the advice it secures. Without a clear-cut mandate and the willingness to consent to some of the advice offered, advisory panels are little more than expensive window dressing.

As a preliminary step, the Task Force recommends that:

1. There must be a system of information dissemination of timely and accurate announcements to local communities. In addition, there

must be a monitoring, evaluating ability as well as a retrieval capacity once a response to the information has occurred;

2. Training procedures must be instituted to give community members the kinds of skills and knowledge which promote purposeful relationships with educators;

3. And, finally, the Task Force should participate in a review aimed at the inclusion of succeeding levels of the powerless in the formulation and application of the rules and regulations and practices of the Office of Education.

To the Office of Education, then, the Task Force message is clear. To be a change agent and facilitator, the Office of Education will have to examine its legislative recommendations and its own processes and procedures as well as those of school systems across the land. The Office of Education will have to invite the educational consumer into its own operation. It will have to alter its own outlooks and structures to recognize, utilize, and derive benefit from "the community." The current situation only highlights the accuracy of Thorstein Veblen's comment:

"In time, immutable rules of conduct enforced under progressively changing conditions--should logically result in a muddle."

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

Preparation for Community Involvement

Successful implementation of a strategy for participation requires action on a number of recommended changes. Successful changes in the educational system depend to a great degree on the trained abilities and knowledge of individuals and groups within local communities, as well as on the facilitative capacities of national and regional planners. The long-range strategies for community involvement should begin at the national level, reaching local levels through regional structures. Technical assistance and supportive services should be provided by well-designed and integrated training packages that will prepare local residents, operating outside of established professional, semiprofessional and/or technical groups, for effective partnerships in Office of Education programs.

The community training program recommended by this Task Force should begin with a system of information dissemination that assures timely and accurate announcement of plans, funding schedules, and grant awards to interested groups. Traditionally, the system for informing the public of U.S. Office of Education programs has generally not reached local levels of community folk. Critical information, including details of funding both categorical and discretionary programs, is largely not readily available to those for whom such programs are ostensibly intended. In particular, minority groups and the poor are most neglected and left unaware that many of these programs even exist. This creates a situation which is tantamount to "tyranny by information control."

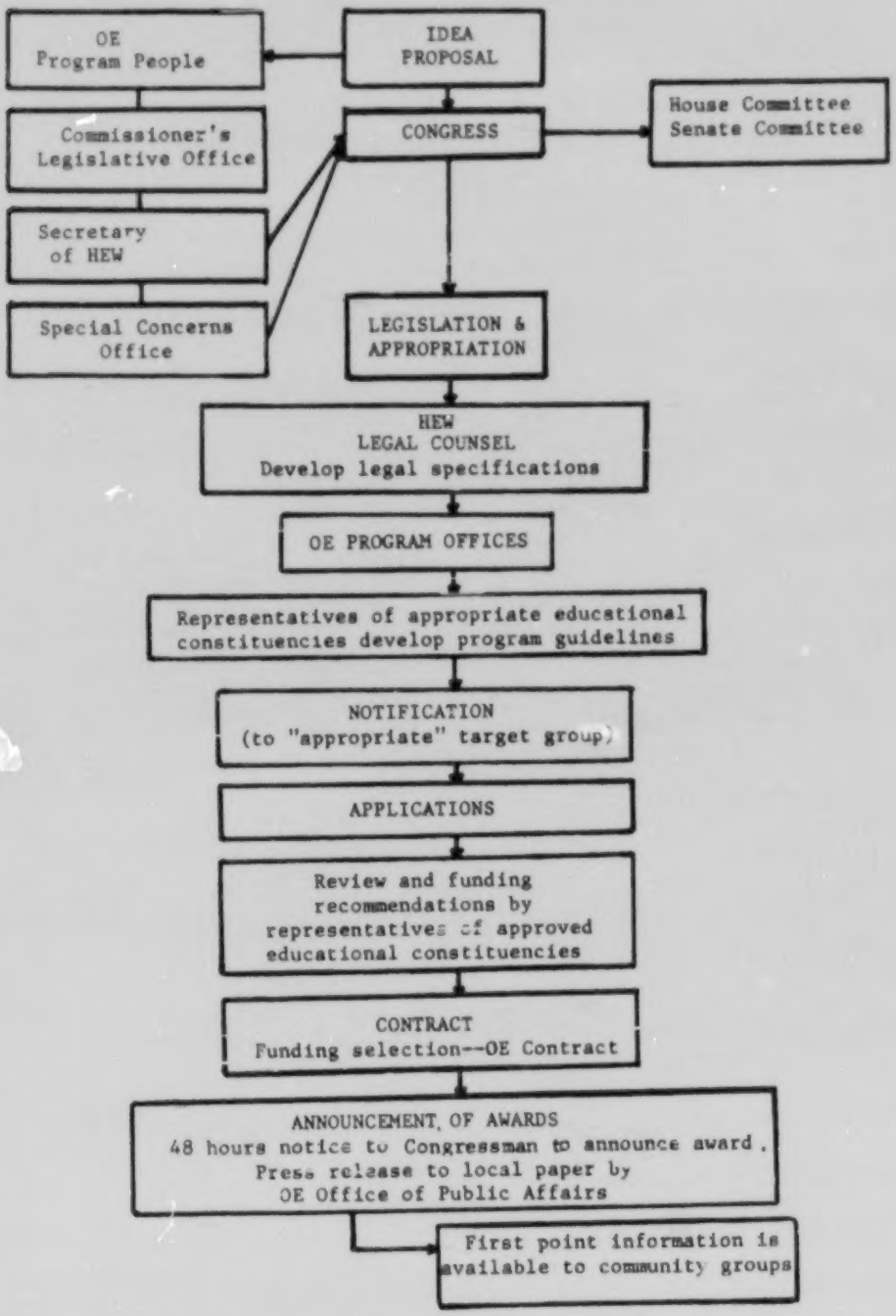
This Task Force made extensive inquiries into the present process of disseminating information about grants and funds that are available to the community for educational purposes. The system (illustrated in Chart I) generally informs the public only upon the announcement of awards by local Congressmen. The Task Force recommends, as an extension of this system, the establishment of an information network that will:

1. Insure access to all information in its embryonic stages at Federal, regional, and State levels.

2. Consist of a system capable of internal monitoring, and

3. Assure equal opportunity for community groups to participate in all programs.

Chart I. System of Information Dissemination in 1972



IV. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Insuring access to all relevant information demands an information network that immediately and regularly communicates complete plans, proposal guidelines, and acceptance, approval and funding for programs to the poor and minority groups. Relevant information should be provided in its embryonic stages at the Federal, regional, and State levels, and made available in time for communities to act on and react to the plans on a relatively equal basis with all other groups, organizations, agencies, or associations. The information network would contain two channels which monitor one another. One of these channels should also be capable not only of carrying information from the national to the local levels, but also of providing an effective method of conveying appropriate local community inputs from the local level to the appropriate higher levels. (Such a feedback mechanism should be taken seriously by decisionmakers.)

The disestablishment of education requires that community groups and individuals be given the same opportunity as the school districts or the agencies to fully participate, whether individually or in partnership with the others, in any publicly funded educational program. Such a proposed information network, fulfilling these requirements, is outlined in Chart II and summarized in Chart III.

Explanation of Network

1. Collecting Information

Federally financed Community Offices of Information (designated as COI's) will be created at the national, regional, and State levels. The staff in each of these offices will be responsible for collecting information on all educational programs from the program offices of the U.S. Office of Education, the Federal Register, regional offices, and State program offices, as well as from any other governmental agencies which sponsor programs relevant to community concerns for education. The information collected will include all program specifications, program regulations, and program guidelines.

2. Synthesizing Information

All collected information will be synthesized into a concise and clearly stated form for dissemination which means that it must be interpreted for the public in a manner that will eliminate unnecessary technical jargon, "legalese," or other phraseology that tends to be unfamiliar to those who are not a part of technical or professional disciplines. In some cases, it may also be necessary to translate program information into languages other than English.

Chart II. Proposed Information Network

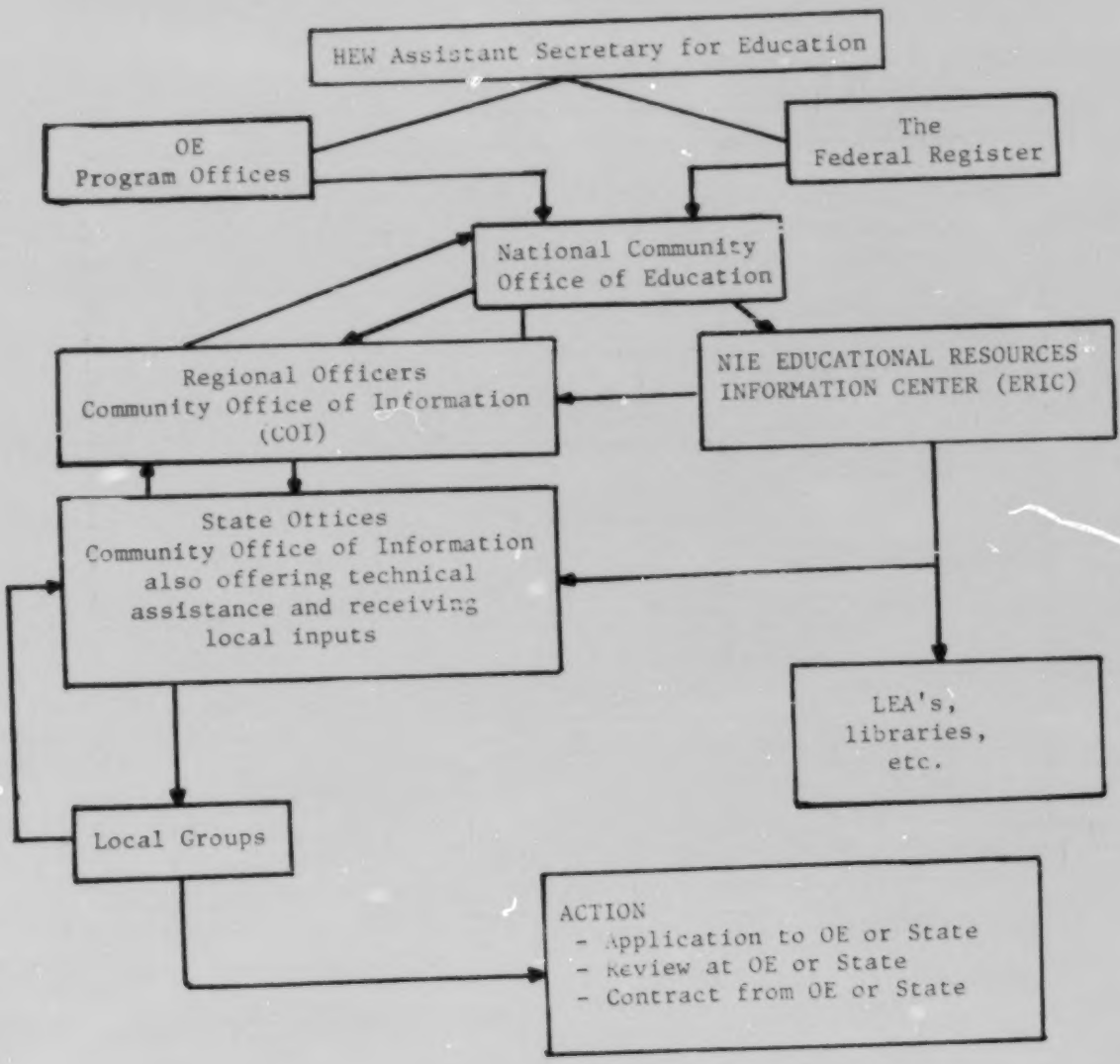
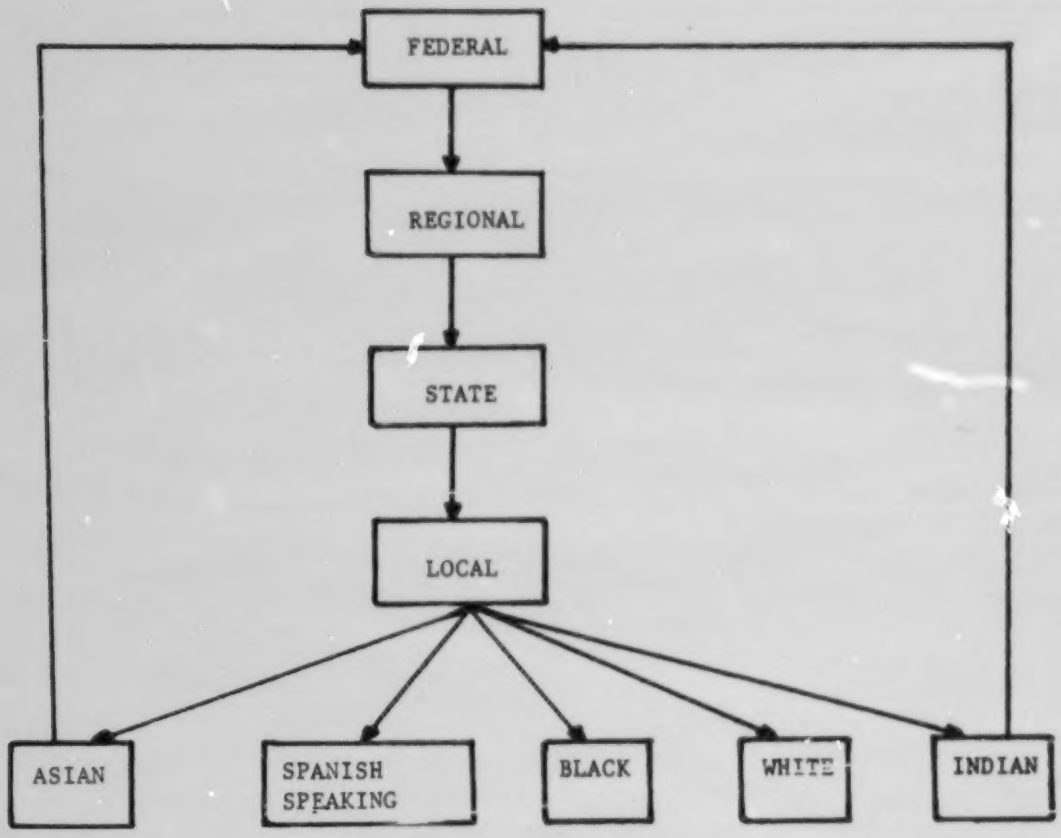


Chart III. Summary of Proposed Information Network



3. Distributing Information

All information collected on Federal programs will be distributed simultaneously through the COI and ERIC channels (see Chart II).

A. The national COI would send collected and synthesized information to the regional COI by Federal teletype and by mail. This information will then be sent along by the regional office to the State COI's where it will be forwarded, in turn, to all interested local groups.

B. The national COI is conceived of as responsible for sending collected and synthesized data to ERIC for distribution to regional offices, State offices, and local outlets (libraries, universities, and local educational agencies).

The information collected and synthesized at regional and State levels will be distributed by mail to the different local outlets. State COI's would be expected to provide technical assistance to local groups wishing to question or to prepare to act on available information by initiating applications. The State COI's will be expected to act as collections points for reactions by local groups. These reactions would be transmitted through other levels of the COI network.

4. Assuring Receipt of Information

All information must be distributed to appropriate local community groups. Such groups are defined as all those economic, political, and racial segments of communities which have been traditionally excluded from participation in the governance process of schools. Politics, not needs of the children, have traditionally determined which local groups will receive particular benefits, but all groups, regardless of color, differences in language and/or culture, should be afforded equal access to the basic information.

5. Acting or Reacting to Information

Action initiated by community groups upon receipt of information might involve a number of different alternatives. For example, it might involve individual proposal applications to the Office of Education or joining forces with other groups such as local educational agencies, or other community groups. If, in making a joint proposal, local community groups perceive an educational program as wrong, discriminatory, or otherwise deficient, they may choose to react to the proposal itself. The COI channel of information is designed to transmit the reactions of the community back to the national level as well as to report the positive reactions of community groups. The information network insures that protests, too, will be

transmitted to the appropriate level of decisionmakers, a far cry from the current situation in which good news dominates.

6. Monitoring the Network

Since all nationally collected information will be distributed through the COI channel and the ERIC channel simultaneously, the system is afforded a chance to monitor itself. All information from the Federal level should reach the local communities by two routes. In the event this does not happen, community groups may call to account the specific channel of the network which did not supply the transmitted information. The COI and the ERIC channel serve as a kind of check and balance to one another. The two-channel network of information transmission and feedback is recommended by the Task Force in order to provide the most efficient means by which community groups can keep abreast of programs and trends, can guide their own efforts, and maximize their participation in Federally funded programs. To enhance the efficiency of the network and facilitate its personnel in meeting their objectives, the Task Force also proposes that:

1. All COI personnel be housed in the U.S. Office of Education Office of Public Affairs for purposes of salaries and benefits, and

2. Initial selection of COI personnel be made with the active assistance of the National Community Field Task Force on Educational Change.

Thus, the Task Force offers a communication and coordination mechanism designed to enhance participation, and improve the information and experience flow. This mechanism affords organized institutional groups an opportunity to gain data as well as to reach one of their primary audiences--the community. Development of such a network is not a gain for the community alone, or a gain at the expense of the other groups, but rather a gain for community and a possible new important source for the other institutional vested interest groups represented in this field involvement process.

V. TRAINING RECOMMENDATIONS

While a major requirement for effective participation seems to be early, concise, accurate, and timely dissemination of information about program, another important ingredient is a training component (see Chart IV). Local training institutes would seek to provide experiences, instruction, coaching, and formal training opportunities to local participants. This Task Force recommends the design and provision of appropriate training modules for community participation in Office of Education and community-based programs. Initially, the National Community Task Force should recruit and select highly motivated personnel to implement such a training regimen. It is also of foremost importance that training for specific groups of people--migrants, immigrants, displaced peoples, and urban and suburban citizens--be tailored to prepare the different groups and individuals for participatory citizenship. While the basic structure of an overall training program can be prepared at a national and even regional level, many sections or modules must be tailored to meet specific local needs and to deal with the specific geographic areas.

Complete training packages would be composed of both general and specific modules prepared for the specific populations to be trained. The training program recommended by this Task Force has been developed on the basis of modules that can be assembled into combination packages to meet the specific requirements of various communities. The twelve abbreviated modules identified in this outline offer a coverage of some of the necessary skills and capacities needed for effective community participation in the field of education.

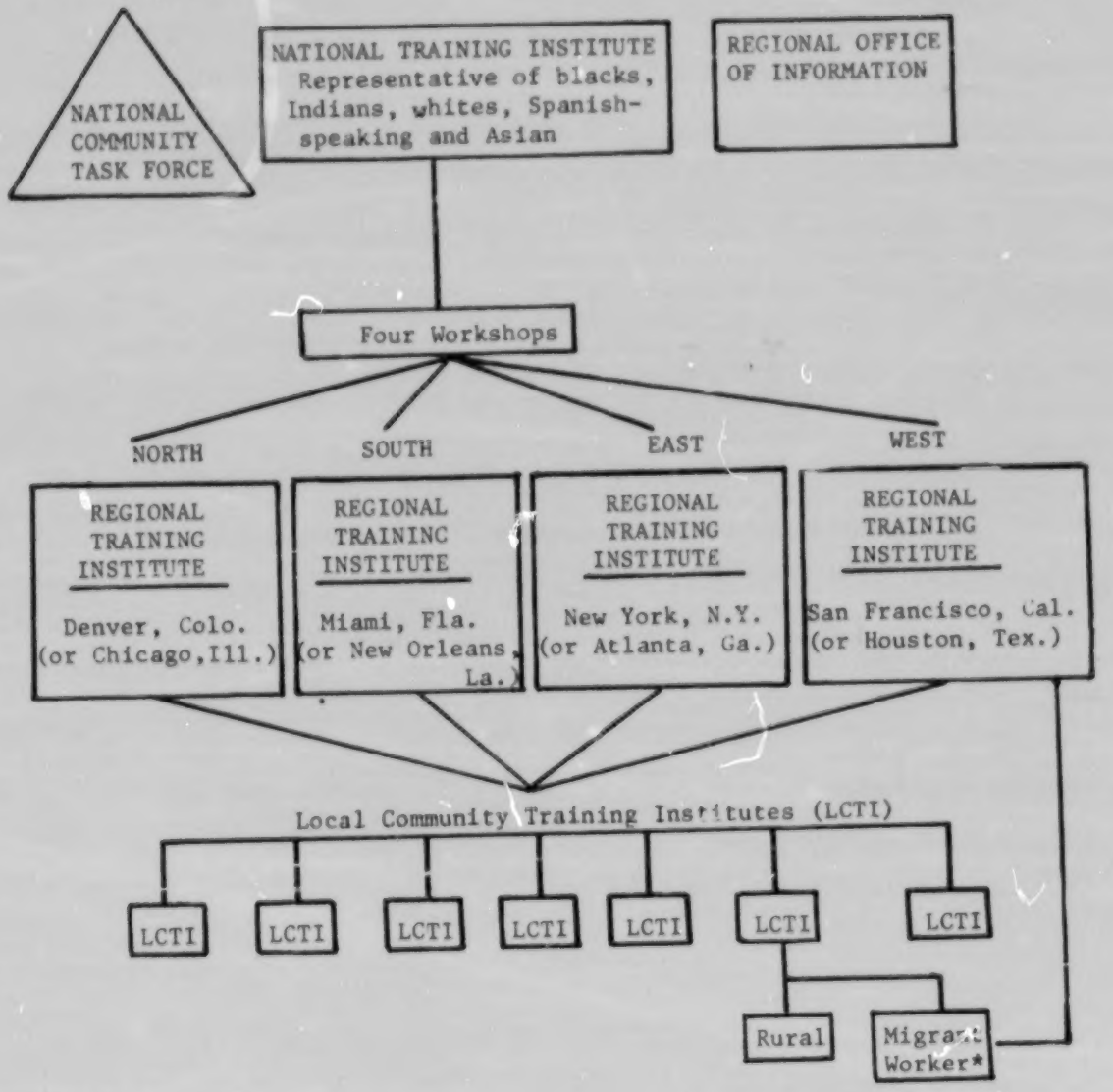
Three arbitrarily selected training modules will be briefly described in this outline to provide a fuller view of the full development of a training design.

Training Strategy

Workshops will be designed to encourage active participation by community trainers. The rationale to be employed is to "learn by doing," facilitated by trainers employing the latest educational techniques which include:

Instrumented exercises	Management and educational games
Role play	Audiovisual aids
Case histories	Practical work assignments, e.g., community assessment

CHART IV. COMMUNITY TRAINING FLOW CHART



*Migrant Worker Training
Both in urban and rural settings, consider his poor health condition and high fatigue quotient in relation to his training.

Training Process

The "Training of Trainers" module will ensure the development of an ongoing training capability at each of the local sites represented during any of the regional workshops on training (described below).

Training Materials

Training materials and supplementary aids will be developed to repeat and to reinforce the learning in content and skills areas.

Evaluation

Evaluation will be accomplished at all levels of training throughout the conduct of the project. The types of evaluation should be:

1. Internal
2. External
    a. USOE--Community Task Force
    b. Participants' evaluation

Operations

The operational structure of the training workshops has been developed from the following assumptions:

1. There is a necessity for conducting regional workshops.
2. Each regional workshop shall be planned to include the basic training modules that are described in a later part of this section.
3. The total number of participants to be trained is open.
4. Participants will be selected by community constituencies at the local sites on the basis of.

a. previous community involvement and participation,

b. demonstrated local leadership potential (though not necessarily in the field of education), and

c. long-term community residents will participate to ensure that the local community will benefit from the training.

5. Regional trainers will be selected by the National Community Task Force on the basis of:

   a. significant expertise in the field of training,

   b. sufficient knowledge about the ultimate recipient of training services, and

   c. national recruitment, ethnic group skills banks, OE skills banks.

6. The cost of travel and per diem for participants is to be defrayed by the Federal Government or any combination of Federal, State, and local levels.

7. The cost of training and support personnel will be specified in separate cost estimate.

Modules

Units of training are outlined below to provide an overview of the content and the specific skills that might be developed. At this point of development, no calendar or clocktime is estimated for each module. It is suggested, however, that at least three to four weeks per workshop be considered, each workshop to provide training for an adequate number of participants with some evening sessions included.

The following basic modules are recommended:

1. Orientation and overview: Local Education Agency (LEA)

2. The organization of education in the United States

3. School policy

4. Community involvement and participation

5. LEA operations

6. Problem identification and analysis

7. Resource and needs assessment

8. Group problemsolving

9. Evaluation and monitoring: curriculum

10. Evaluation and monitoring: education personnel

11. Evaluation and monitoring: pupil performance

12. Evaluation and monitoring: Federal programs

13. Evaluation and monitoring: fiscal policies and procedures, State and local education agencies

14. Strategy development and implementation

Outline of Training Modules

1. Orientation and Overview

   A. Problem census

   B. Local education agencies

      1. Purposes

      2. Goals

      3. History

      4. Current state-of-the-art

      5. Fiscal policies and procedures

2. Organization of Education in the Continental United States, Alaska, Hawaiian Islands, and Puerto Rico

A. Power and power relations: Education

1. Office of the President

2. Congress

3. National office (USOE)

4. State office

5. Fiscal policies and procedures

6. Local education agency

a. Board of education

b. Office of the superintendent

c. Local policy and operations

d. Comparison--national systems (European and Puerto Rico) vs. local systems

B. School polity (school policy and its political significance)

1. Identifying the power structure

2. Power in the community

3. State level

4. Federal level

5. Education: Legislation

6. Resources: Federal source material

a. Congress

b. Local power wielders

c. Community groups

C. Community involvement and participation

1. Community involvement: concept, roles, and responsibilities

a. Policymaking

b. Information-sharing

c. Monitoring

d. Problemsolving

e. Community organization

D. Local LEA operations

1. Organization and structure

2. Policy implementation

3. Educational programs: overview including enrichment programs and career education

4. Basic academic programs: overview

5. Academic gains

E. Problem identification and analysis: causes, possible solutions, best solutions

F. Resources and needs assessment

1. Process and techniques

a. Gathering information

b. Analyzing information

c. Sources and methods of information gathering

d. Evaluation and forecasting for future direction

G. Group problemsolving

1. Techniques and strategies

a. Setting objectives

b. Determining strategy and activities

c. Building support and establishing linkages

d. Implementation of policy

e. Evaluating action

f. Followup activities

Objectives and Outcomes

Several modules have been randomly selected to provide an abbreviated overview of the significant components to be included in a complete training design:

A. Module: Resource and Needs Assessment

Objectives:

1. To determine what issues and problems are of greatest concern to target area participants.

2. To analyze and establish guidelines for examining and learning principles of leadership.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Participants will identify those problems in each of the three target areas that are of greatest concern to them.

2. Based on initial skills in review and analysis procedures, participants will be introduced to the basic principles of group leadership and will demonstrate their understanding by oral participation and by the ability to relate principles to practical and familiar local situations.

B. Module: Group Problemsolving--The Process

Objectives:

To teach various approaches to group problemsolving techniques:

* task groups
* problemsolving wheel
* force field analysis
* information gathering
* establishing priorities
* other

Expected Outcomes:

Trainees will be able to exhibit understanding, knowledge, and skills in problemsolving techniques to include:

* exploration and analysis
* problem identification
* keying on problems
* problem analysis
* setting priorities
* developing alternatives and options by selecting a problem(s) of common interest to the group and developing a viable plan for resolution of the problem.

C. Module: School Polity

Objectives:

1. To identify various kinds of power and the implications for the lack of power and the attainment of power, such as: control over money and jobs, social status, ethnic identification, and public sanction.

2. To clarify distinctions among power, influence, authority, and control.

Expected Outcomes:

1. Trainees will exhibit their understanding of the different kinds of power by the quality of their oral participation within the group and

through the correct identification of local groups or persons representing different kinds of power.

2. Trainees will exhibit their understanding of the differences among the four factors which determine power and the relationships among these factors in terms of their local conditions and communities through the use of community assessment.

Reference to Flow Chart

At the regional level, it is necessary to recruit and to employ the services of the Community Offices of Information. Why? Because their information, including program specifications, program regulations, and program guidelines, is a natural partner of the modules cited. There is certainly the need for cross-fertilization between the information and the training groups, both in human resources and materials, i.e., specialized training by COI in information "fresh off the Office of Education vine."

Training for Citizenship

The program and training design offered by the Task Force speaks of no pie-in-the-sky notions. In fact, the concept presented serves as a model to institutional groups within education for the content and methodology needed to prepare people to be engaged in making the decisions which affect their lives. Another lecture course, demanding an expert who speaks from lofty Mt. Olympus, is not needed. Rather, what is needed is a training program geared to the needs and styles of adults. It is almost unimaginable that this society, the Office of Education, or other institutions would not welcome a way to help the citizen meet his fundamental citizenship responsibility.

Summary

In summary, the Task Force started from the assumption that the community indeed has a vested interest in schools because it owns the schools. The Task Force already knew, however, that the ownership of the schools has been preempted by the few. Only a very limited number of powerful people in the total community have been exercising the rights of ownership in schools. Moreover, the employed professionals have come to assume, in speaking for the owners, that control has indeed passed into their hands. These two distortions should be recognized as fundamental sources of the problems and difficulties confronting schools in a pluralistic society.

Therefore, the Task Force not only reclaims community ownership but also insists upon a redefinition of the concept of community that has as its cornerstone the regular and intimate inclusion in the arena of ownership of the presently powerless, usually defined as those who are poor and/or of racial minority origins. This redefinition of community is essential, for the redistribution of power and resources. The redefinition of roles it implies are necessary to assure that the children of the powerless are no longer blamed--genetically, environmentally, attitudinally, or any other way--for the failures of the educational system. The redefinition of ownership requires that the role of professionals be redefined and that they assume their proper roles as valued and essential employees of the system rather than covert owners of the system. Finally, all future educational planning and implementation must involve the community as redefined. This means planning with rather than for the community.

Operationally, the community must be provided with all pertinent information about the educational system at all levels from local schools to the U.S. Office of Education. Community approval and counsel must be sought on all policy questions on a regular basis and the system must be revised structurally to assure such participation in governance. To this end, the National Community Field Task Force proposes an information network designed to operate on national, regional, State and local levels, with the injunction that the transmission of information to the community, and the resultant involvement, are prerequisite to the introduction or continuance of any programs in the schools.

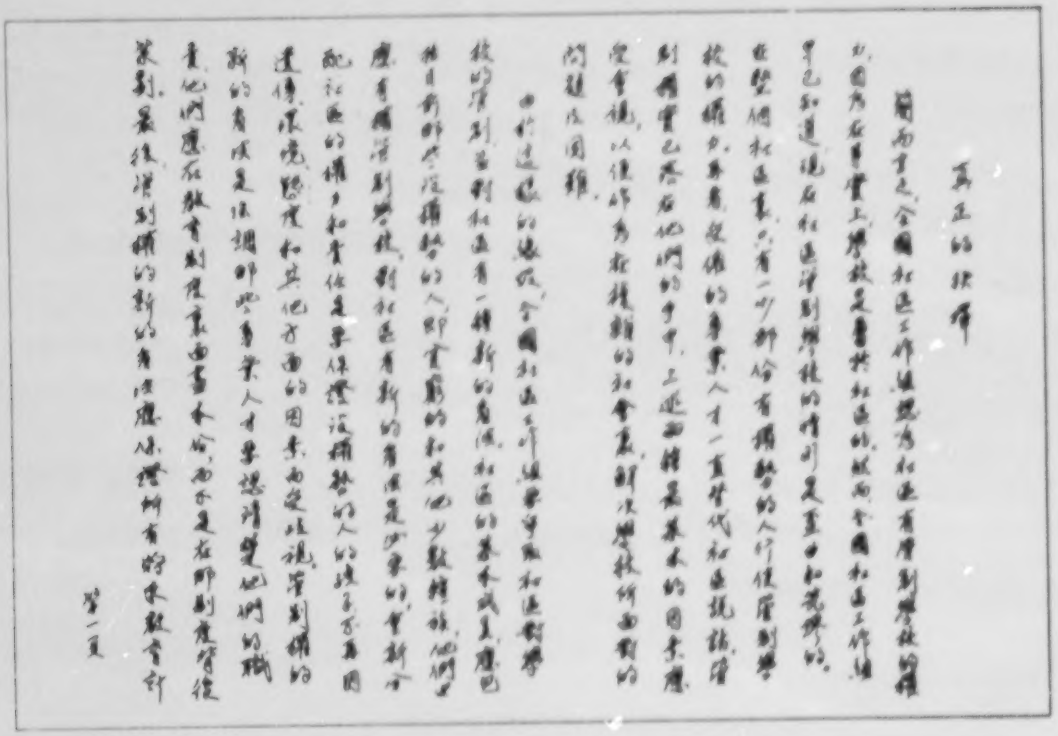
Recognizing that the community has not had the opportunity to practice the arts of ownership and governance for some time, the Task Force proposes a national training netowrk to assure that community representatives are trained in the necessary skills and knowledge to assume their reclaimed ownership and governance responsibilities.

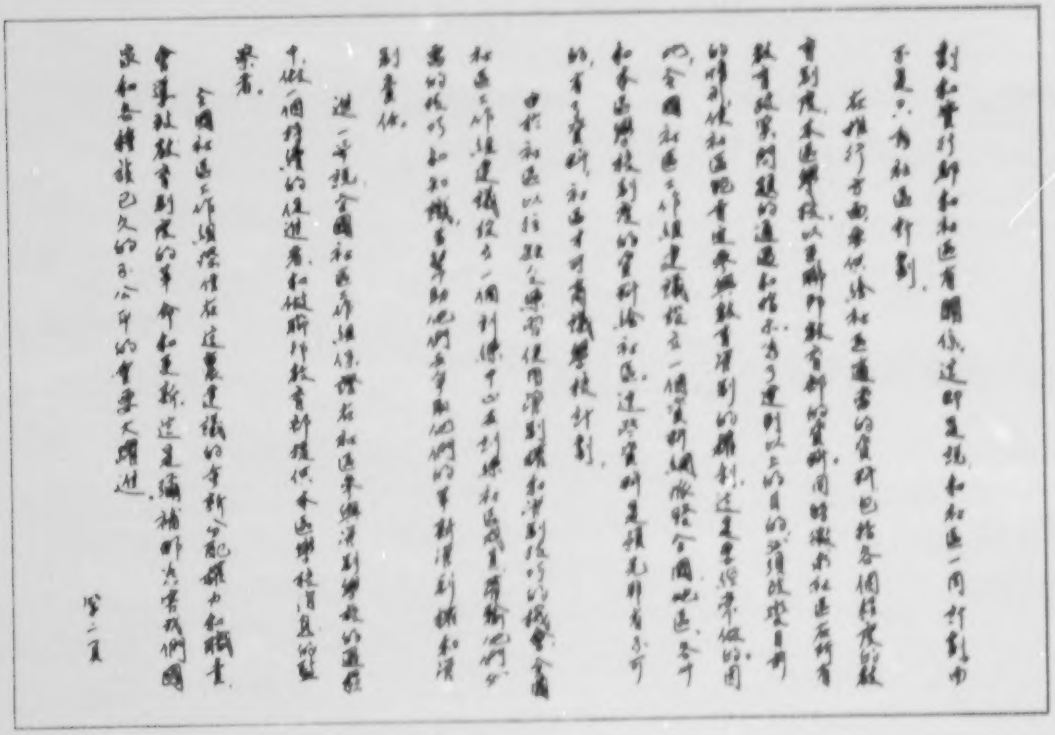
Further, the National Community Task Force proposes that it play a continuing role as the developer of the community involvement process.

It is the profound conviction of the Task Force that the net effect of the redistribution of power resources and roles proposed here will lead to the revitalization and renewal of the educational system.

Following is a summary of the Task Force Report in Chinese Calligraphy.

Summary of Task Force Report in Chinese Calligraphy.





NOTES

1. See "Equality of Educational Opportunity" by James S. Coleman and "What are the Real Risks When A School Tries to Change" by Herb Kohl, Saturday Review, May 27, 1972, p. 48. See also Michael Sexton's "Who is the School?" in the same issue, p. 32-35.

2. The Task Force exercises one of its prerogatives to suggest that the real learners in the revitalization program advocated here are the adults who desperately need to rekindle their own will to learn.

3. See Phi Delta Kappan, September 1972.

4. See Schuman, Howard. "Sociological Racism," TransAction, December 1969, pp. 44-48.

5. Fischer, Ronald W. "Mental Institutions and Similar Phenomena Called Schools," Personnel Guidance Journal, September 1971, pp. 45-50.

APPENDIX A

THE METHOD IN THE MADNESS

Charles E. Wilson

"If politics is the art of the possible, community participation may be the art of the impossible."

—Government Official

People in education talk so much about "the community" that one is at times deceived by their words. But one is seldom deceived by their actions. Their words speak of involvement, hope, and progress. But their behavior speaks of elitism, timidity, uncertainty, and active withdrawal. For it is possible in terms of these contradictions to speak of participation without informing interested elements of the lay public about their rights, without telling them of programs and the impact of these programs upon children, and without telling people about the resources that are really needed. It has also become possible to talk about community participation without coming to grips with those groups who are most critical of the status quo. It is possible to speak of participation without changing anything, merely by recruiting those whose names create the biggest stir to serve on blue ribbon panels and study groups.

All levels of the private and public sectors seem to engage in practices which produce minimal citizen participation. So it is worthy of attention when an agency tries to do something else, tries to clarify the issues and objectives by asking for the ideas of someone other than in-house experts; tries to recruit a task force that has not been selected from a blue ribbon panel of officially approved experts, and, more important, tries to determine the task force's goals and objectives in a manner other than following the dictates of the official sponsors. Finally, it is big news when a task force tries new ways to report the results of its efforts. It is even more gratifying when an agency seeks new approaches and is part of the Federal structure, a structure that is often accused of fomenting and stimulating efforts and practices that it does not practice in its own operation.

In this instance, under Federal auspices, issues about community were identified. A Community Task Force was recruited, charged, set to work, and helped to produce a number of documents and products. This Task Force's work could be divided into three distinct phases:

* Clarification of notions on member recruitment,

* Development of objectives and timetable, and

* Development of the products.

The experience with the three phases offers several important lessons for those interested in involving the "community" and encouraging its participation:

1. Involvement and participation without extensive sharing of information is largely window dressing.

2. Involvement and participation by community can be facilitated by technical assistance and advance planning in order for the community to be both timely and effective.

3. Involvement and participation by community requires a flexible partner—Federal or non-Federal.

4. "Bureaucrat-ese," the language of the bureaucrat, with its tendency toward verbose misdirection, works to turn off and mislead those lay folk who are interested in working for improvement in education.

5. Vested interest groups (professional, union, and organizational, as well as those representing skin color dominance and class interest) seem neither interested in nor open to the consumer—the learners, their parents, the ethnic groups, the suburbanites, etc. And without such representation on all levels, no real renewal, revitalization, or sweeping reform is possible.

The total experience suggests, then, that participation is not so impossible as it is time-consuming, energy-absorbing, and demanding. Participation is not so impossible if there is a genuine will to find ways and means to include people. Participation is not so impossible if new ways are found to reduce red tape, double talk, gobbledy-gook and meaningless jargon and if individuals are willing to seek and test new relationships. Furthermore, the government may benefit, providing that it is willing to record and to learn from these experiences. For there is a method which can indeed make the impossible feasible.

Three Phases in Far Too Rapid Succession

The Office of Education has been actively engaged in efforts to help school systems throughout the Nation upgrade and improve education for the children of this land. In its role as stimulator, even sponsor, of change processes, the Office of Education has tried to gain interest and support for its notions on reform and comprehensive planning.

> In its continuing effort to develop national programs which are more responsive to local needs, the Office of Education established six field task forces in early 1972 to contribute directly to its intensified efforts to help improve the Nation's school systems and the preparation of the people who staff them. These new groups, appropriately called the Field Task Forces on Improvement and Reform of American Education, represent a major commitment by the U. S. Office of Education to involve people, institutions, and organizations as partners in a continuing appraisal of existing national programs and in the development of alternative program strategies.[1]

The Community Field Task Force activity emerges from the recognized need to engage and involve not only the established education institutional forces, but also the sleeping giant—the community—that increasingly desires to make its wishes heard and have its demands listened to and responded to.

The very pace of the activities of the Community Task Force serves to discourage examination and analysis of the processes and methods employed in its recruitment, mobilization, assignment, and report development. Yet the three main phases seem feasible amid the helter-skelter and hurley-burley of the intensive effort:

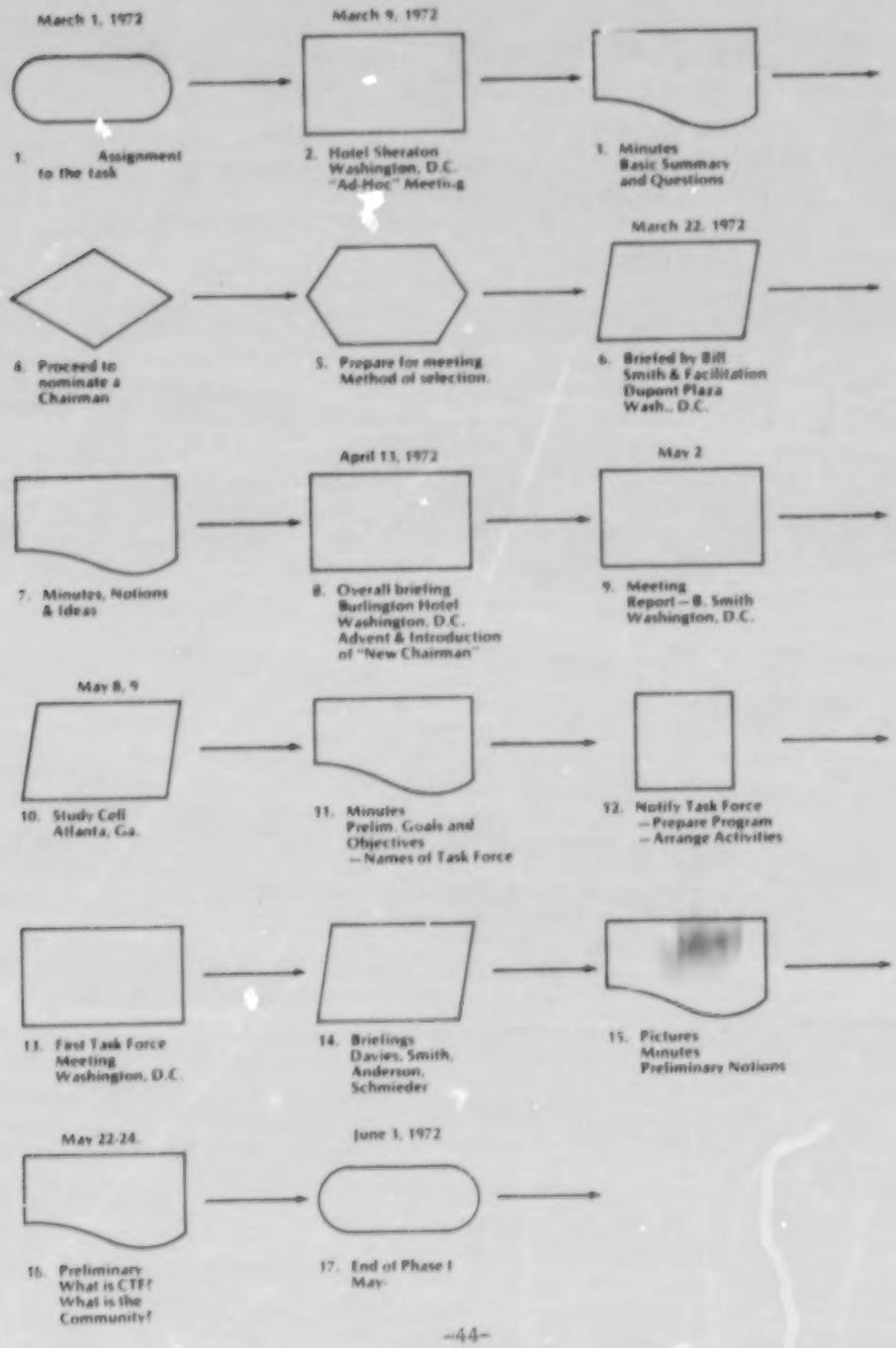
1. Development of standards for recruitment of the Task Force,
2. Development of objectives, and
3. Development of products.

Phase I

The first phase covered a period from March 1972 to June 1972 and was of such a nature that a simple flow chart was able to capture the sequence of events and dates of various meetings. (See Chart 1.) Employing two different modifications of "the gatekeeper approach," conveners of the National Community Field Task Force first tried to identify crucial issues in which community participants would be interested, areas the community participants might wish to know and need to know in relation to the idea of participation itself. As part of this first step, individuals familiar with ongoing Office of Education projects tried to identify programs evidencing community participation and to label significant elements related to the notion of community involvement. This first step helped organizers of the Task Force to crystallize the general areas in which technical help might be needed by community participants if those participants were to be representative of localities and ethnic and racial groups but

Flow Chart of Community Task Force Activity.

Phase I


March 1, 1972
1. Assignment to the task
March 9, 1972
2. Hotel Sheraton Washington, D.C. "Ad-Hoc" Meeting
1. Minutes Basic Summary and Questions
March 22, 1972
4. Proceed to nominate a Chairman
5. Prepare for meeting Method of selection.
6. Briefed by Bill Smith & Facilitation Dupont Plaza Wash., D.C.
April 13, 1972
May 2
7. Minutes, Notions & Ideas
8. Overall briefing Burlington Hotel Washington, D.C. Advent & Introduction of "New Chairman"
9. Meeting Report – B. Smith Washington, D.C.
May 8, 9
10. Study Cell Atlanta, Ga.
11. Minutes Prelim. Goals and Objectives – Names of Task Force
12. Notify Task Force – Prepare Program – Arrange Activities
13. First Task Force Meeting Washington, D.C.
14. Briefings Davies, Smith, Anderson, Schmieder
15. Pictures Minutes Preliminary Notions
May 22-24.
June 1, 1972
16. Preliminary What is CTF? What is the Community?
17. End of Phase I May-

at the same time capable of producing a product reflecting their experience, their needs and their deliberations.

The second part of the first phase saw the active utilization of "the gatekeeper approach" to locate people. A small committee of Task Force leaders, including the chairman, Charles Warfield, was selected to recruit others. This approach presented a practical way to leap over a number of significant recruitment barriers in the process of securing a national task force encompassing representation from various racial, class, and ethnic groups. Most of the people recruited for the Community Task Force have had some contact and familiarity with various Federal programs. This fact proved of inestimable value to the Task Force in terms of the proposed short span of its life and the nature of its mission.

As testimony to the success of this kind of approach, by the end of May 1972, Dr. Allen Schmieder was able to report that the Community Task Force had been formed and was working. What is significant is not merely the achievement of Phase I, but that Task Force members themselves were engaged in the recruitment process. The Office of Education and the technical helpers had developed a process for working <u>with</u>, rather than <u>for</u>, the community.

Phase II

The Office of Education National Community Field Task Force on Improvement and Reform of American Education set as its overall objective the following:

> By October first, they hope to have accomplished two major tasks: 1) a critical review of all significant program documents related to the concept of educational renewal, and 2) completion of their own recommendations regarding how best to use Federal funds for the improvement of the quality of American education. In addition to the direct influence that Task Force recommendations will have on the improvement of certain ongoing OE programs, the viewpoints of all of the groups, as well as synthesis of their six reports, will be published and widely distributed in order to catalyze a continuing national dialogue on education reform.[2]

Within those parameters, the Task Force had to choose its own objectives and organize its groups in order to pursue those goals, a difficult process for individuals who before March hardly knew one another--individ-

uals who, while representing groups, do not command resources or access to resources of major institutional groups.

Development of the Task Force's objectives as the second phase of the work of the Task Force was neither a simple task fitting into a smooth, chronologically oriented flow chart nor as easy a task as mere recruitment and selection of individuals. Furthermore, in contrast to Phase I, the products of Phase II had to go beyond the mere development of lists, notes, papers, and articles.

From the beginning, the Community Task Force's work had not been left to an entirely educationally unskilled and uninitiated neophyte group. Members of the Task Force had been recruited with an eye to the tasks that had to be performed and with an awareness of the predispositions of Office of Education staff. The Task Force possessed not only critics of present systems but also individuals with knowhow and demonstrated capacity for production of materials which could be placed at the disposal of the entire group. Thus, it was important, especially on a national level, to organize a group which could indeed present the community point of view to a nationwide audience. In addition, the possession of skills afforded the Task Force leverage in dealing with its consultant helpers as well as a capacity to articulate its own objectives and meet those goals.

Identifying goals and objectives was not made any easier by the introductory and briefing statements of Office of Education personnel. Often encumbered by office jargon--"whereases" and "heretofores"--some of these briefings, while frequently erudite, were wordy and uncommunicative. Suggested notions were submerged in "bureaucrat-ese." Yet other briefings did contain expressions of solid support, unclouded descriptions of present operations, and concrete data and information. Some official speakers chose not to sidestep obvious contradictions in the position of the Office of Education, but to face these conflicts head on, admitting obvious structural inadequacies, lack of realistic timetables and practical shortcomings. Such admissions seemed to encourage a group that was somewhat overwhelmed by the immensity of the task of identifying community concerns in educational change.

First efforts to articulate objectives were clearly unsuccessful, prompting the calling of a steering committee meeting in Kalamazoo, Michigan, on June 14, 1972, devoted almost exclusively to that issue. At this session, several concrete objectives for the various working subgroups were developed.

When first presented to the Summer Institute in Tampa, Florida, these objectives created some notice among participants from other task forces who were at that meeting, for these objectives were organized, neatly

packaged and developed to the point that the statements were contained on overhead transparencies.[3] Yet, in general, the other participants took little notice of either the technique or the content.

While other task force groups were somewhat taken aback by the capacity for union between the National Community Field Task Force members and their technical assistance helpers, the Task Force itself had to review the objectives for feasibility within the Office of Education deadlines and dollar constraints. In addition, the Task Force chose to let its objectives be in some way shaped by the information, needs, demands, and insights of activists and community folk who resided at sites where the monthly meetings were held. In Denver, San Francisco, and wherever else the Task Force traveled, community representatives were able to describe their needs and experiences, offering a kind of practical field-based response to the plans and objectives drawn up by the group. Furthermore, the interviews provided needed opportunities to listen and talk to program participants across the country and to establish contact with activists and practitioners who seem to be working toward involving lay people in the educational decisions which affect their own lives and the lives of their children.

The re-examination of goals and objectives was also a continual part of the work of the Task Force. The business of change and re-examination was necessitated by the shifting schedules of the Office of Education.[4] The Task Force sponsor's original assessment of the work to be done, for example, was not entirely accurate, nor could it have been expected to be. It was determined after the Task Force was well underway that more time than was anticipated would be needed to allow the groups to secure all the desired and necessary inputs from constituency groups and to determine the best possible strategy for using the reports and recommendations that were to be produced.

The products of Phase II could not be measured by notes, articles, and minutes alone. New products were developed by Phase II processes:

1. Number of contacts with local groups;
2. Number of participants, active as well as passive, on the various subgroups of the Task Force;
3. Contacts with other task forces; and
4. Timetable for production of final work.

Each of these new kinds of products and processes offers some measure of the effectiveness of the Task Force as this group pursues its objectives.

The Final Phase

While Phases I and II involved both product and processes, the final phase of the National Community Field Task Force processes determined to a great degree the extent of influence of the Community Task Force. As a result, the Task Force conceived of two kinds of products:

1. A report to communicate the findings from the six months of activity and

2. A set of videotapes packaged as Communerama.

During this final phase, the Task Force sought to articulate its point of view, include as many of its own members as possible in production of materials, and involve the total membership in the evaluation of materials developed as examples of the kinds of materials needed by local and regional community groups.

Even before the process was completed it was apparent that there was already sufficient evidence to support these conclusions:

1. Participation is a difficult, slow process, with uncertain twists and turns, particularly if democratic values are seen as desirable.

2. Parity, as articulated, is in great measure a myth for the local community participants.

3. The withholding of information, ideas, and concepts is the primary means for protecting the status quo in local areas.

4. The inability of Washington's policy planners to establish and encourage the development of a communication network for the community (gaining a sense of reality) dooms many programs to the impact of the Forrester principle, i.e., mammoth programs transported from Federal to local levels frequently lose on the local level due to poor "translation."

5. Without active technical assistance, community task forces have little chance to accomplish substantive work.

6. The leap from the position of a local area leader to national arena spokesman is a giant step which requires time and skilled help to develop.

7. Products for and from a community group can be shared with regional and local groups if a mechanism is developed to permit this sharing.

Particularly in regard to the sharing of basic information and the need for technical helpers, the experiences of the mobilization and development processes of the Task Force offer considerable graphic evidence that these two steps are important. At every step, the Task Force was able to turn to its helpers for critical advice, data, or simple program support to insure completion of the various tasks that were part of the overall effort. Less obvious was the importance of changing the deadlines and timelines for group activity in order to facilitate participation. Incumbents sometimes do not seem to recognize how the very structure of education and its present practices effectively screen out newcomers.

It is not always obvious how the bureaucratized language of today's system is both obscure and confusing to newcomers who are seeking information, support, or assurance. Nor is it always readily apparent how today's vested interest groups represented on other Task Forces within the Summer Institute appeared to ignore and overlook the Community Task Force, its activity, its position, and its demands. From the first, the perfunctory treatment of the National Community Field Task Force suggested that today's "status quo-ers" did not always recognize that the community representatives were not asking for a piece of the action, but that the Task Force was asserting rather directly that it perceived itself as the consumer who was, in fact, the action. The community wanted and demanded an accounting of the stewardship of other groups in relation to that central point. No such accounting was secured or even offered. That this central fact was given such short shrift by the other groups engaged in the same activity clearly accentuates the great difficulty of achieving any meaningful reform.

A Method to Deal With The So-Called "Madness of Participation"

The document of the Field Task Force on Improvement and Reform of American Education Mission Outline lists specific steps for the various field task force groups.

1. REFLECT CONSTITUENCY VIEWS necessary for formulating the proposed and developing educational renewal strategy;

2. REVIEW AND CRITIQUE policy documents relating to educational reform;

3. DRAFT POSITION PAPERS on issues and problems of central importance to existing and proposed programs;

4. INTERACT AND LINK WITH KEY GROUPS concerned with educational change;

5. IDENTIFY PEOPLE, PLACES, MATERIALS which have relevance to USOE program development;

6. DISSEMINATE INFORMATION to constituencies through meetings and publications;

7. PREPARE INTERIM AND SUMMATIVE REPORTS for use in this improvement of current programs and the planning and development of future programs;

8. DEVELOP LINKAGES AND MECHANISMS to promote effective, long-range cooperation between the field and USOE;

9. PROVIDE INVOLVEMENT PROCESSES models for utilization in policy development, definition, and determination by future planning groups.[5]

The Community Task Force has tried to achieve those objectives in its own way, in terms of the needs and expressed wishes of its constituencies.

Participation on the level of a National Task Force for community people can be merely expensive window dressing or it can be real and meaningful. It is window dressing if the intention to involve the community is not genuinely present, if the mechanisms for true involvement are absent, if other groups disregard the group's notions as if they did not exist, or if there is no real attempt to alter procedures and timetables to accommodate new players within this new game. Unfortunately, at this juncture, some of the experiences of the Community Task Force seem to deserve the designation of window dressing.

On the other hand, the experience of the Community Task Force has been made both memorable and meaningful because of the interest and dedication of the Task Force participants, the interest and expertise of their technical helpers, and the cooperation and support of Office of Education personnel. The experience is real because of the concern members have learned to show one another.

Removal of the situations and circumstances which reduce the value of participation on a nationwide level will indeed help to make Office of Education programs more effective in the long run and to make the Office of Education more responsive and sensitive to the needs of the community--the consumers and their representatives. Participation, then, need not be madness--if there is purpose and a deliberate process.

NOTES

1. See Field Task Forces on Improvement and Reform in American Education--Mission Outline Matrix. July 12, 1972, p. 1.

2. Field Task Forces on Improvement and Reform in American Education, p. 3.

3. See Appendix D, Objectives Presented to Summer Institute.

4. See Appendix F, Rationale for a Communerama.

5. National Field Task Forces on Improvement and Reform of American Education, p. 4.

APPENDIX B

THE COMMUNITY:

A CHANGING COALITION OF THE GROUPS OUTSIDE "THE SYSTEM"

Community--no other word so raises the blood pressure and the scorn of established educational groups. Conditioned to believe in their own capacity to reform a human service system and socialized to consider decisionmaking as the province of the professional elite and the major educational institutions, the established groups repeatedly ask two major questions:

Who is the community?

What do they want?

The National Community Field Task Force seems unusually well qualified to discuss these questions <u>again</u>. For the explanation of community has been made repeatedly and <u>still</u> professional groups have not heard. Indeed, there are none so deaf as those who will not hear and those who will not try to listen.

<u>Who is the Community</u>?

Simply stated, the "community" is a coalition of the groups outside the present nonrepresentative system of school governance--the minority groups whose interests are ignored, not heard, or not dealt with equitably by local school boards and whose children are frequently turned off and turned around in the classroom. The poor are the "community." The community also includes those trapped in forgotten rural areas and the students captured by the mindless web of "rhetoric without reason" which characterizes so much of what passes for schooling. The college instructors, the community reformers, and education specialists who know that education in this day and age does not have to be like it is are also part of the community coalition. They are familiar with the growing technology and methodology. Most important, they know how to put it all together to produce a growing sense of humanity and a system which can free people rather than bind them.

<u>The coalition of groups called "community" has been forged by a common history and elements of a common experience</u>. These groups are destined to suffer a remarkably similar fate if changes and improvements do not occur at a rapid rate. Largely in the hands of other people, their education has been segregated; they have been shunted aside, then desegregated, and now resegregated. Their education has limped along with inadequate resources and safeguards and is still controlled by "downtown"--

the dominant group power structure which exists regardless of the color of the system's functionaries.

The community has been the last hired, first fired, last consulted, first insulted, last informed and first blamed--every effort has been made to drive them away. Their legitimate concerns have been transformed and ignored by various strategies of dominance. For example, to a greater or lesser degree, community participants have been eyewitnesses to "token" co-option of leaders, bribery of the unsuspecting, and pay-offs to critics; they have been on the receiving end of threats, insults, malicious rumors, scandals, and even violence. Time and time again, elements of this group have been faked out and victimized by false promises, fake panaceas, and paper programs. They have had huge sums siphoned off in their name by universities and school system overlords.

The notion of community is difficult for established groups to grasp because they are victims of their liberal ideology and its concept of the limited community--based upon shared taste, shared neighborhoods, or shared specific interests. Furthermore, school leaders and elected school boards frequently conceive of the poor and minority groups not as individuals but as monolithic--incapable of deciding for themselves, incapable of speaking for themselves, and categorically unable to choose priorities, design programs, or allocate resources.

Thus, the difficulty of accepting the new view of community is as much a question of wishing to maintain professional control as it is a difficulty in understanding the changing consciousness of a significant number of community folk. The new view of community raises questions about the traditional urban groups who claim to represent the interests of the people. But it is always easier to question the legitimacy of the powerless or the disadvantaged groups than to examine the rationalizations of the forces of the status quo.

What Do They Want?

The second major area of concern for the community coalition centers about the goals and objectives of the community: what is it they really want? The very question reveals the degree to which laymen and professionals of the community are held in contempt and how much the elitist notions of reform have come to dominate the views of functionaries in the human service fields. Traditional reform notions seek to undermine parochialism and establish a responsible professional elite. Such a traditional view does not deal with the realities of a human service system. Human service systems can be improved if the clients and the customers are participants in the delivery system on a local level. This notion requires that the clients be seen as positive human resources and not as objects to be operated upon.

What must be recognized and appreciated is that the changes that community folk seek are broader and deeper than changes in method or approach alone. Community people are seeking changes in goals and objectives of education. For too long, the minorities have been conceived of as uneducable. Under these circumstances, to merely change the pedagogical approach seems inadequate.

Simply stated, the community is the "un" part of the system, whose potential has been neither recognized, appreciated, nor developed. Largely outside of the current order, the community is not illegitimate or fraudulent. What <u>is</u> illegitimate and fraudulent is a system of American educational governance which has tried to function by shutting out community elements from the decisionmaking and decision-implementation processes.

What follows is the Spanish translation of the preceding section of Appendix B.

<u>La Comunidad</u>:

Una coalicón transitante de grupos fuera del "Sistema."

La Comunidad--ningún otro concepto tanto altera la tranquilidad de los pedagógos arraigados o evoca su desdén como éste. Créyendose capaces de efectuar la reforma del sistema de servicios para el Pueblo, y acostumbrados a que las decisiones las toman grupos profesionales o por las instituciones mismas, los pedagógos repetidamente preguntan:

¿Quién es La Comunidad?

¿Qué quiere?

La Brigada de La Comunidad debe responder a estas preguntas una vez más, pues el significado de "La Comunidad" se ha hecho repetidamente y aun los grupos profesionales no han oído. No hay nadie tan sordo como aquél que no quiere oír y aquél que no trata de escuchar.

¿Quien es La Comunidad?

"La Comunidad" es una coalición de grupos fuera del sistema escolar gobernante--aquellas minorias cuyos intereses no son considerados, son ignorados, no son atendidos imparcialmente por las Mesas Directivas de educación y cuyos niños frecuentemente son menospreciados en las salas de clase. Los negros, los hispanos, los indios, los orientales, y los blancos pobres son "La Comunidad." También incluye a aquellos residentes de lugares rurales olvidados y a los desafortunados estudiantes

que son victimas de lo que pasa por educación. Los profesores de colegio, los activistas en la comunidad, y los pedagógos que saben que la educación no tiene que ser asi, también forman esta coalición.

Este grupo está a tanto de los avances tecnólogicos y pedagógicos, y aún más importante, saben qué hacer para producir mejor entendimiento entre la humanidad y un sistema escolar que libre al individuo y al pueblo.

Esta coalición de grupos o "Comunidad" se ha forjado por elementos de una experiencia y una historia común; grupos destinados a correr una misma mala suerte si no se llevan a efecto pronto cambios. La educación de estos grupos, que está en manos de otro grupo, se ha segregado, olvidado, más tarde desegregado y ahora se ha segregado una vez más. La educación de estos grupos ha sido una educación que ha sufrido de escasos recursos y protección inadecuada y que aún está controlada por el grupo poderoso, no obstante el color de los funcionarios del sistema.

Los miembros de La Comunidad han sido los últimos que se emplean, los primeros que se despiden; los últimos con quien se consulta, los primeros a quien se insulta; los últimos a quien se informa y los primeros a quienes se culpa--se ha hecho todo lo posible para rechazarlos. Sus preocupaciones legitimas han sido transformadas e ignoradas, con el propósito de continuar la dominación. Por ejemplo, los participantes de la comunidad han presenciado el uso de "muestrismo," el soborno de algunos descuidados, y la "compra" de aquéllos que tienen la audacia de criticar. Algunos hasta han sido victimas de amenazas, insultos, rumores maliciosos, escándalos y hasta la violencia. Muchisimas veces miembros de estos grupos han sido victimas de engaños, promesas falsas, penaces inventadas y programas inadecuados. Fuertes sumas de dinero han sido mal adquiridas a nombre de estos grupos por mandatarios de los sistemas universitarios y escolares.

El concepto de comunidad es dificil de comprender para los pedagógos establecidos porque ellos mismos son victimas de su idiologia liberal y el concepto de la comunidad limitada--basada en gustos comunes, barrios similares o intereses especificos comunes. Además los lideres escolares y mesas directivas de educación elegidas frecuentemente ven a los pobres y a los grupos minomitarios no por sí mismos, incapaces de intervenir por sí mismos y categóricamente incapaces de elegir prioridades, trazar programas o distribuir recursos.

Así es que la dificultad de aceptar esta nueva idea de la comunidad no es más que muestra del deseo de mantener el control profesional sino también ejemplo de la dificultad de comprender el cambio en un gran número de los miembros de la comunidad. Esta conceptualización de la comunidad provoca algunas dudas sobre los tradicionales grupos urbanos que se dicen representar los intereses del pueble.

Siempre es más fácil menospreciar a los que no tienen poder o a los grupos perjudicados, que analizar las racionalizaciones de las fuerzas en poder.

¿Que Quiere?

La segunda área de preocupación para la coalición de la comunidad se centra alrededor de las metas y fines de la comunidad, ¿que es lo que realmente quiere? La pregunta revela cuanto desdén se tiene por los legos y profesionales de la comunidad, y cómo la idea de reforma del grupo poderoso domina la perspective de los funcionarios en el campo de servicios para el pueblo. Las ideas tradicionales de reforma procuran cambiar el parroquialismo y para establecer a los escogidos profesionales. Tal perspectiva tradicionalista no encara las realidades del sistema de servicios para el pueblo. Los servicios para el pueblo pueden mejorarse solamente si la clientela participa en el sistema.

Esta idea requiere que los clientes se reconozcan como recursos humanos positivos y no como objetos en quienes se debe operar.

Lo que debe ser reconocido y apreciado es que los cambios que la comunidad busca son más profundos y extensos que cambios de mêtodo. Los miembros de la comunidad buscan cambios en los fines y las metas de la educación. Por mucho tiempo se ha creído que los miembros de los grupos minoritarios son ineducables. Bajo estas circunstancias, cambiar simplemente la metodología pedagógica no es suficiente.

Simplemente dicho, la comunidad es la parte "excluida" del sistema cuyas capacidades no se han reconocido, apreciado desarollado. Estar fuera de la orden de la sociedad, no hace a la "comunidad" ilegítima o fraudulento, lo que si es ilegítimo y fraudulento es el sistema americano de autoridad educacional que ha tratado he operar sin incluir a los miembros de la "comunidad" en los procesos de decisión e implementación.

The National Community Field Task Force

The composition of the Community Task Force has raised a number of questions. The coalition of representatives of the various racial groups and spokesmen for submerged social class enclaves, student representatives, and credentialed individuals has already surfaced some crucial issues. Just who is a part of the group and what is its focus?

Even though few persons would bother to question the interests and foci of the other "more readily accepted" task forces, the questions and issues raised about the Community Task Force should be faced forthrightly.

Who?

The Community Task Force is a body comprised of 20 persons representing the nonwhite color groupings--black, brown, red and yellow--joined by representatives of lower-income whites, middle-income credentialed whites, and male and female students as well as teachers drawn from every region of the land. For the most part, the membership of the Task Force is drawn from "outside" the narrow confines of the governance system of public education and consists of outsiders who demand participatory roles in the development and maintenance of public service programs. Drawn from OEO programs, from CAP agencies, from successful Office of Education programs utilizing local community participation approaches, they have been joined by critics of schools as they are presently operated. Task Force members, from whatever sector, have shown that they came to serve. Most of the participants have had previous contact with programs financed by the Office of Education. A large percentage of the Task Force members have personally participated in those programs. As a result, they bear the scars of experience, and they raise significant issues about federally financed programs. Most perceive the need for new mechanisms for alerting and informing people about the functions of the local school and its programs and plans as well as the need to inform local people of their own rights and responsibilities in federally funded efforts for change.

What's Up?

The preamble statement of the National Community Field Task Force says:

> There is nothing wrong with our children, but with the system--and the Community Task Force places the blame squarely where it should be. It calls for an end to the rummaging through the psyches of the children and the parents; it calls for an end to the rhetoric of change without the substance provided by professional groups. Finally, it calls for the convener of the task forces, the Office of Education, to begin to examine its practices and its practitioners.

The group does not seem carried away with militant verbal postures. Nor does the Task Force wish to be used as a sort of group which sanctions the games that some bureaucrats wish to play.

Watchful and wary, the Task Force proposes to work diligently during its brief life span to make meaningful inputs to the Office of Education and to make efforts to grasp information and learn from the other task forces. But along with these functions and obligations, the National Community Field Task Force members acknowledge a primary obligation to their own home constituencies--the children, young people, and older students who must be served.

APPENDIX C

OBJECTIVES PRESENTED TO THE SUMMER INSTITUTE* IN TAMPA

Community Task Force

A group of people, lay as well as professional, recruited from various walks of life, from different sections of the country and from different ethnic groups, who have manifested interest and energy in improving and changing education.

Proposed Mission Statement for Task Force

To change and improve educational processes and their outcomes for children and adults through their total involvement and participation.

Who is the Community Task Force?

Sixteen to 20 persons drawn partially from outside the system of public education, representing various racial groups, spokesmen for submerged social classes which are largely unrepresented. The members have manifested interest and energy in improving and changing education.

Who is on the Task Force?

Occupationally--men and women, students and teachers, education critics, and lay people

Ethnically--Italian, Puerto Rican, Chicano, British, German

Racially--white, brown, black, red, yellow

To Build and Maintain a National Task Force

Specific Objectives:

1.1 To recruit a representative group for the National Community Field Task Force

1.2 To disseminate information concerning school improvement processes

1.3 To gather, analyze, and assess education information, especially of renewal

*A group of scholars concerned with problems of educational reform. (See Foreword p. v.)

1.4 To act as a vehicle for orientation and training of the regional and local community-based constituencies

1.5 To act as a liaison to USOE and other Federal programs

1.6 To act as a liaison to other task forces

To Mobilize Regional Community Constituencies

Specific Objectives:

2.1 To act as a linkage mechanism between national and local constituencies

2.2 To assess regional training needs

2.3 To provide counsel and advice to the local constituencies

To Activate Locally Based Community Constituencies

Specific Objectives:

3.1 To assure a representative group for membership on a local level

3.2 To disseminate information and provide assistance concerning the school improvement processes to local groups

3.3 To change and improve what happens in local educational systems

3.4 To provide feedback to appropriate levels

3.5 To alert local citizens to local educational issues

3.6 To develop increased parent interest in the education of our children

APPENDIX D

THE NATIONAL COMMUNITY FIELD TASK FORCE POLICY STATEMENT

The Task Force began its deliberations with three basic premises: 1) reassertion of the historical and legal fact that public schools are owned by the community; 2) present dysfunctions of public education are systemic in origin and are in no way to be blamed upon alleged individual pathologies of children; and 3) there is an imperative need for the disestablishment of education. Following is an elaboration of each of these premises:

Premise One: It is clear in all school law over a considerable period of American history that the public schools belong to the community. This obvious truth should serve as a reminder to other groups who have vital interest in schools (i.e., teachers, school administrators, State school officers, and university personnel). While their services are needed and welcome in the educational enterprise, they, as professional groups, do not own the schools. Indeed, they are employees.

It is also true that schools, under law, do not belong just to parents or students or the power structure of a given community, but to the total public. The schools are therefore accountable to that public and may be scrutinized by the public, or any segment thereof, at any time, to review the school system's stewardship in carrying out the sole purpose for its existence, i.e., providing quality education for all children, relentlessly and without diversion to other purposes or priorities.

The community's statement of ownership implicitly assumes a broader base of community consultation and participation than the present narrow base of governance invested in school boards. As examples of representative democracy, most school boards turn out to be neither representative nor democratic. In fact, too many groups have been regularly excluded from the increasingly closed educational system.

The Task Force proposes to overturn such exclusion by its reassertion of the total community's rights of ownership of the system and, therefore, its rights to information, to be consulted, and to participate in all decisionmaking processes involved in system governance.

Premise Two: The Task Force rejects out of hand any assumption, implicit or explicit, which states that blame for system failure is somehow to be placed upon the victims of the failure, the children. On the contrary, the Task Force asserts that failure is systemic. The professional employees of the community have generally failed in their assigned tasks.

The basic parameters of that failure seem clear. Employees have constructed a system which 1) implicitly assumes that all clients must be white middle class; 2) has developed its own definitions and language consistent with the assumption of homogeneity; and 3) has regularly excluded other inputs which would seem to challenge the system's exclusionary assumptions.

The results are also clear. The consortium of teachers, administrators, and university personnel have constructed a jail for themselves and an impenetrable fortress aloof from those segments of the community which do not conform to the system's model definitions.

Ventilation of this rigidly codified, over-organized, and unresponsive process can only come when a coalition of community groups, currently outside the system, is able to reassert its shared ownership of the system and thereby redefine and restructure the system until it returns to its franchised purpose and is held strictly accountable for its performance in accomplishing that purpose.

Premise Three: The disestablishment of education means removing the educational process from the sole governance of the professional groups currently reigning over it. This is not to suggest in any way any kind of reciprocal exclusionary policies. Schools cannot function without teachers, administrators, and university personnel. But it is increasingly evident that schools are not functioning for the benefit of all children with such professional persons as the sole owners of the governance process.

The Task Force asserts as a basic premise that governance rightfully belongs in the hands of the broad community and that the community is the only force which can correctly arbitrate territorial disputes among professional groups. The community recognizes that disestablishment means redefinition and redistribution of power, and asserts that the community willingly assumes the responsibility for such negotiations as part of its right to insist upon accountability. It is the assertion of the Task Force that no other viable and legal way exists to unlock the system and free both the jailers and the jailed.

Finally, it should be said that this policy statement involves only the premises under which the Task Force is operating. The deliberations of the Task Force start here. The balance of findings will appear in the final report of the Task Force. Such findings should include specific recommendations on the form and substance and the process and product of the Task Force's vision and reform.

APPENDIX E

RATIONALE FOR A COMMUNERAMA AND COMMUNITY TASK FORCE REPORT SYSTEM

The plan to present the findings and notions of the Task Force in new ways to different audiences as well as to the Office of Education is predicated on one basic assumption:

The Community Task Force was not always accepted as a full partner in the educational change process. As a result, Task Force reports must be timely, separate, distinctive and directed to policymakers as well as to other task forces in an unusual way in order to get their attention, if only for a fleeting moment.

* The use of technology to assist the Task Force's presentation should capture attention of educators, Leadership Training Institute consultants, and other task forces.

* The timing of the report must precede the reports of other groups, making the definitions for them.

* The report must maintain low budget cost and high cost/benefit ratios.

* It must seek to make definitions and not allow community issues to be defined by other groups.

The strategy proposed for the Task Force rests on research evidence that people who wish to adopt new approaches need to meet with people who have managed or experienced the innovation and to meet with people in a small group on almost a one-to-one basis in order to answer their concerns and to set up the basis for learning new concepts.

In addition, the strategy rests on the experience that sage comments, wise books, documents, and clever words alone do not assure either the grasping of an idea or the performance of complex deeds. Thus, limiting the report to one document or to another publication alone is a sterile approach by a group which exists largely outside the system. The Task Force must not allow itself to sink into a morass of futile gestures and regimented steps. The various constituencies that members of the Task Force represent are far too important to be submerged in a polar blizzard with little chance for action, for new experience and new opportunities to learn.

One course of action that has been proposed is a two-pronged effort:

1. A series of publications:

   A. Issues and Background to "Community"

   B. Recommendations

   C. Training Designs for Community Residents

2. Communerama (see exhibit plan)

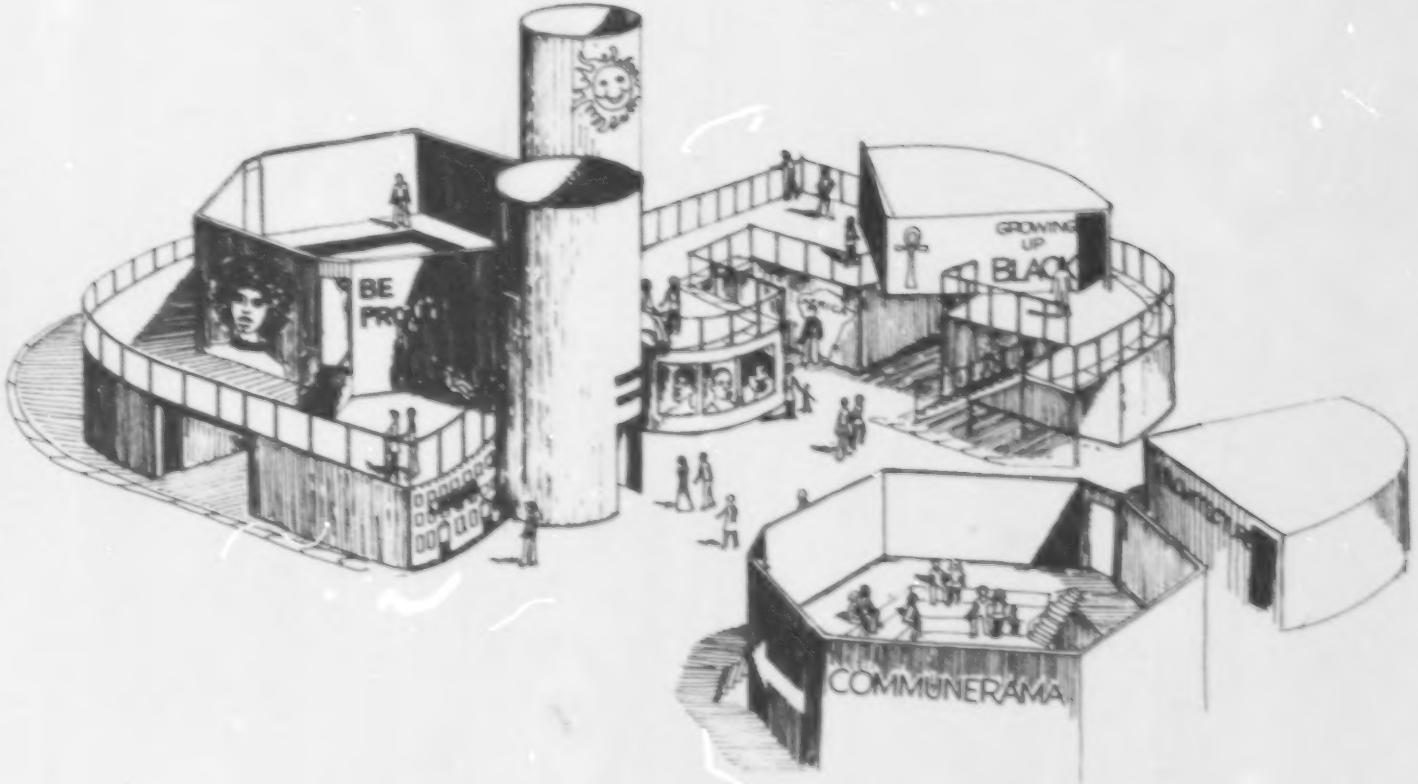
   A 2-day multimedia festival for the general public, Office of Education, and decisionmakers on every level. The festival would provide:

   * Materials providing data and ideas on the benefits of community participation in education,

   * Materials for training of community residents, and

   * A photographic record of the development and accomplishment of the Task Force.

COMMUNERAMA*



*This exhibit plan was produced by a group of architectural students at Pratt Institute. It is a format for a multimedia presentation which can be designed to meet any group's interests. See preceding page for rationale.

APPENDIX F

VIDEOTAPE GUIDE

Videotapes	Narrators	Description	Uses	Time
1. Introduction	Charles Wilson	Summary of tapes. Details purpose, introduces personnel and sponsors.	Orientation; overview	18 min.
2. Computer Culture	Gerry Brooks	Computer's impact on learning, potential for jobs, etc.	Politics of education. Information, training, orientation of parents	23 min.
3. Drug Abuse	Emilio Bermiss Harlem actors	For adult audiences. Deals with destruction within the ghetto by drugs.	Information, training, parent education.	28 min.
4. Found Space	Pratt Institute	Use of created space for children and impact on administration, teaching, and learning.	Information, training, parent education.	26 min.
5. Everywhere	Pratt Institute	A brief trip through Hartford, Conn., examining new community program.	Architecture, community organization, basic information.	28 min.
6. Technology and Television	Ed Wallerstein	For adult audiences. An extensive and intensive overview of what is available and how it can be used.	Teacher education. Community organizations, basic information.	34 min.
7. Information	Kojo Baako	Exposition for adult audiences.	Community, organization, basic information on goals and objectives for local groups.	25 min.

OTHER PRODUCTS

Material	Title & Developer	Description	Uses	Time
Slide Show	Growing Up Black Van der Zee Institute	Graphic presentation. The experiences black youngsters face growing up in America.	Teacher training, parent education, general instruction, political science.	18 min.
Model Mock Up	Communerama Pratt Institute	A model of how various products can be packaged and organized.	Parent education, orientation.	
Slide Show	Problems and Concerns in Urban Education Donati and Friends	A pictorial essay on the Ocean Hill-Brownsville experiment in community involvement.	Teacher education, parent-community education, problem identification.	18 min.

APPENDIX C

NEW LOCAL ADVISORY BOARDS AND COUNCILS

Charles E. Wilson, Brooklyn College

While many members of the educational establishment pay lip service to the notion of citizen participation, it is difficult for the old guard to give up the notion of lay school boards and citizen participation on governing councils as the primary vehicle or even the sole way to achieve citizen involvement. A long history supports the notion of the layman's participation on these boards--school boards, advisory boards of school systems, boards of voluntary organizations, and boards of charitable groups. For the most part, these boards have been advisory in character. The advisory capability of the board rests upon four principles:

1. An acknowledged expertise in the particular area,
2. Personal influence and personal impact of the individual board members,
3. Degree of relative skill deficiency of the professional staff, and
4. The need of the professional staff for democratized representation or for increased contact with the lay constituents in the organization.

In most instances, the advisory functions of lay boards are not respected by the professional groups who themselves frequently withhold information from the boards. Active efforts are initiated to socialize board members, subvert their policy decisions, convert their personal outlooks, and more subtly, to gradually wean the board members away from the very people whom they are supposed to represent.

At the other end of the continuum, some lay boards and board members wish to act completely free of operational considerations or organizational constraints. These unfettered efforts usually reflect a wish to extend the board's power, prestige, and influence at the expense of the director, the superintendent of schools and/or the professional staff. Such efforts are frequently countered and contained by charges of meddling and by covert as well as open resistance to board mandates.

Advisory boards seem to vary in effectiveness and in the manner and intensity with which board members view their own roles. It seems to be an informal rule that the more highly esteemed board participation is viewed, the greater the benefit or rewards for a board member. Where rewards are

great, the greater is the member's depth and level of involvement in the board's activity. Sophisticated professionals seek, therefore, to keep boards informed, engaged, and responsive to their opinions and wishes as well as "sensitive" to the needs of the total organization. In this way, professionals and bureaucrats transform advisory boards into either positive or negative forces.

Behaviors of board members can be characterized as positive and negative. Among the range of behaviors are:

1.	Allies	Positive
2.	Partners	
3.	Supporters	
4.	Program auxiliaries	
5.	Advocates	
6.	Spokesmen rather than critics	
7.	Critics rather than spokesmen	Negative
8.	Program monitors	
9.	General organizational snoopers	
10.	Open enemies	

Thus, for the professionals and staff at large, the primary objective is basic staff relations to keep the board functioning as advisers whose recommendations may or may not be followed. At all costs, boards are not to be allowed to become regulatory or policy implementing for, in these cases, the board's power will have been extended beyond the level many professionals can or care to tolerate.

Lay boards seem to vary in the functions they wish to perform or do perform. This variance in board behavior seems related to:

1. The activity and interest of the professional leadership,
2. Interests and concerns of the board,
3. Activities and concerns of professional staff,

4. Current problems and conflicts,

5. Concern and interest of the constituents and lay public, and

6. The availability of technical help for the board.

The most widely heralded of the advisory boards in public education recently have been the governing boards of the independent districts or the decentralized subsystems, the boards of the free schools, Career Opportunities Program's Advisory Councils and the Urban and Rural School Community Councils. The experiences of these new boards seem to offer basic information about the current functioning of boards in education.

The chart below, prepared by Alan Gartner and Fran Dory of the New Careers Training Laboratories (NCTL), best categorizes the primary functions of the new boards in education as well as the relationship between staff professionals and lay representatives. The chart also suggests a hierarchy of different role functions for the board. Observations suggest that at the information-sharing and problemsolving

FOUR ROLES FOR ADVISORY COUNCILS

Council Role/Model	Activities of Council	Role of Members	Role of Director
Information Sharing	Gains knowledge about the program; disseminates program information in the community	Gather and disseminate information	Provides information to Council members
Problemsolving	Helps to solve problems facing programs	Seek resources to help solve problems	Brings problems to the Council
Monitoring	Probes program activities; evaluates effectiveness of the program; seeks answers to shortcomings	Seek information concerning details of the program, make site visits	Shares information and allows informal action by the Council
Policymaking	Makes decisions about program operation, i.e., selection of director, approval of grant application	Act in a legislative capacity	Acts as staff to the Council; carries decisions

levels of function, boards are useful, even necessary. At the program-monitoring and decisionmaking levels, however, these same boards are seen as a real threat to professional hegemony. The articulation of the roles as identified in the chart does not reveal the tensions that may exist between educational laymen and professionals in the field of education. Frequently, considerable tension is generated about the way these roles themselves are performed, by whom, and why.

Nor does the chart suggest what program demands or events have prompted the need for these lay councils to secure professional and technical help in performing their assigned jobs--help from sources other than their own professional staff. Without this kind of assistance, these local boards (or citywide boards, for that matter) are largely unworkable. Lay boards become the virtual prisoners of their own professional-operational staff without technical help.

Finally, the chart and the roles do not outline what boards can do to bring about change. What are the steps in organizational change process which boards may be engaged in? For a summary of this information, see "Management Processes for Effecting Change," Appendix H. This brief descriptive paper seeks to view the changes in organizations which boards and board members can either stimulate, lead or produce, or, at the other extreme, frustrate.

The roles for a council, then, should be an important area of concern and interest for students of decisionmaking and educational governance as well as for those interested in improving the present dismal educational structure. Citizen participation models should seek to break with the models of the past and to move to entirely new models.

In this brief examination of roles, problems, pitfalls, and perspectives about advisory boards and councils, the exact interest of OE has not been identified and clarified. Several important questions could and should be defined if the interests of OE and the National Institute of Education concerning school reform are to be clarified. These include:

1. What work is to be performed by the advisory board in the change process?

2. At which stage or stages of the process would that board's work take place?

3. What has been the experience of the most recent efforts of programs with advisory councils in the community?

4. Will the board serve as an effective vehicle for participation? How?

5. If not, what would have to be done to make the board more effective?

6. Will the board serve as an effective instrument for the change process? How?

7. If not, what would have to be done to make the advisory board effective as an instrument of change and system improvement?

8. At what cost would this effectiveness be purchased?

9. What are the obstacles to effective board functioning?

These questions seek to focus attention on what OE needs to know about boards and their role in the change process. These first questions do not by any means exhaust all the information it would be important to possess.

The Task Force urges careful attention to the role and functioning of local boards lest these boards become urban copies of the older, less effective, school advisory board whose energies are so sapped by local political struggles that there is little left for genuine leadership-advisory functions.

APPENDIX H

MANAGEMENT PROCESSES FOR EFFECTING CHANGE

When we look at successful management processes, we always find at least the following:

1. There is a board of control which consciously assumes responsibility for the organization's achieving its objectives.

2. There exists between the board of control and the chief executive officer a working relationship which makes it possible for the board to carry out its responsibilities and for top management in turn to carry out its responsibilities.

3. In order to bring about the changes in the organization which are necessary for achieving new objectives, the objectives must be defined; specific goals which would move the organization toward its objectives must be defined; and strategies for the achievement of these goals must be agreed upon. The actual working out of a plan for reaching objectives is largely the responsibility of top management, but it is the responsibility of the board to see that the plan is made and to approve it.

4. Top management, as well as the board, must have an informational system which makes possible the monitoring of the plan. Such an informational system consists of at least the following:

   (a) Indicators which tell whether progress toward goals is being made satisfactorily.

   (b) Defined accountability so that the persons who are responsible for seeing that progress is made are identified.

   (c) An adequate feedback system.

   The board cannot depend exclusively on its chief executive officer as the source of all information which it receives.

5. Once objectives, goals, and strategies have been agreed upon, it is essential that all levels of management understand and accept these objectives, goals, and strategies. To accomplish this, a training program must be instituted for all levels of management, even including the board of control itself. Naturally, in the planning of the goals and strategies, many members of

management at all levels may be included, and such inclusion is in itself an important part of training. However, new objectives and new goals usually require not only new attitudes but new skills on the part of many members of management. Appropriate training therefore should be considered as a continuing obligation. (This is not to say that training for non-management personnel is not needed.) The point should be made, also, that management training should be in terms of the specific objectives, goals, and strategies of the organization. This type of training must be done under the supervision of the company and should not be confused with the type of training which members of management may obtain by attendance at universities or other training institutions.

APPENDIX I

POLLING MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY TASK FORCE

The compartmentalized character of the work and organization of the Task Force may have established an artificial barrier to effective participation by Task Force members. Members of the major subcommittees--Recommendations, Training and Information--because of their own areas of concern, were not always able to make their concerns and opinions felt in the deliberations of other subgroupings. To overcome this isolation, the technical assistance group, with help and guidance from Task Force members, prepared an informal questionnaire which was sent to each of the Task Force members. Answers to specific questions were sought in each of these three areas of concern:

1. General recommendations
2. Training for community participation
3. Information needs of community participants*

I. General Recommendations: Results

According to the Task Force members, recommendations should be addressed to a choice of groups from this list:

1. Office of Education
2. Community
3. Local district
4. Teachers
5. Administrators
6. Inservice teacher training institutes
7. State school officers
8. Schools of education
9. Other (Congress)

*A copy of the questionnaire is included at the end of this discussion. This was prepared to document the position taken by the group.

Recommendations to the Office of Education should cover the following areas or topics, ranked in order of selection.

Rank Topic

1. Legislation sought
2. Better definitions
3. Community Task Force
4. Ways to monitor community involvement
5. Making information available
6. Findings
7. Guidelines

What would the individual specifically recommend for the Office of Education?

Responses included:

1. The Office of Education must take specific action steps to safeguard the educational rights of children (assigning competent persons to assure that services and benefits are delivered).
2. Specific staff assignments must be made to carry out the recommendations of the Task Force; new staff should be hired to perform new functions.
3. Clear legislation must be drafted that articulates concerns for children's learning.
4. Communications and guidelines must be made more readily available to local folk.
5. Federally funded community participation activities must provide opportunities for lay people to develop leadership-followership skills and even new employment-career opportunities.

What kind of document should support the Task Force recommendations?

1. Analysis and presentation of a brief history

2. Clarification of the areas of effective and ineffective models for participation

3. No comment

Who should prepare these materials?

1. A representative subcommittee of the Task Force

2. Task Force and technical assistance helpers (Facilitation Group)

3. Committee made up of people at all levels

4. No answer

All eight respondents would be willing to review the materials designed for final recommendations of the Task Force.

For local school districts, the Task Force recommendations were in the following areas:

Rank Areas

1. Making information available

2. Funding

3. Community Task Force

4. Community Involvement

5. Guidelines

6. Notices

In specific recommendations for school staffs, the Task Force recommended that they should:

1. Provide training for community groups

2. Develop organizational vehicle that includes training personnel for this kind of activity

3. Become more aware of the needs of children

4. Provide information to dissident groups--the paraprofessionals as well as the nonunion teachers--telling them about what is happening to and with children.

The members speculated about the other Task Forces with recommendations similar to those of the Community Task Force. Three groups drew the same number of votes:

1. Chief State School Officers Task Force
2. Administration and Supervision Task Force
3. Teachers Task Force

II. Information Questionnaire: Results

With respect to information, those who responded wanted the following data from the Office of Education in this order:

Rank Information

1. Areas of interest and responsibilities for Office of Education staff
2. New programs
3. Leadership of those programs and the persons in charge
4. Funding levels and schedules
5. Proposal requirements

From the regional level, however, the kind of information needed was somewhat different:

Rank Information Needed

1. Leadership (who is in charge)
2. Funding schedule
3. Information about new program

On the local level, the kind of information needed was still different. Respondents wished to know:

Rank Information Needed

1. Data on new programs
2. Funding schedules
3. Proposal requirements
4. Leadership (name of person in charge)

This conclusion about the Federal level is supported by the answers to the question: What Federal program information is most difficult to secure?

Rank Kind of Information

1. Initial guidelines and proposal data
2. Operation of the program and beneficiaries
3. Areas of responsibility
4. Concrete evaluation of ongoing programs
5. Reporting dates and requirements for followup
6. Level of funding
7. Responses to operational questions and correspondence

The overwhelming weight of expressed information needs of community persons polled suggests the need for some marked improvement in the quality and quantity of information shared by the Federal level with local people. When asked about the easiest kind of information to obtain, the most striking remark was, "Nothing was easy to get for the community." Other persons reiterated the fact that basic program information was indeed hard to get on the local scene.

The local mechanisms for informing people of educational activities ranged from word-of-mouth (the "inside dope" from administrators and teachers) to extensive systems of radio, news, meetings, newsletters, personal relays, etc. But even some of the highly developed and extensive systems lacked a bilingual capacity (e.g., New England has not a single Spanish-language paper carrying education news). The range of information access also included a number of communities and areas which seemed to have a number of underdeveloped informal systems which were not

always effective or functional. The most popular sources of information for groups on the local level as rated were:

Rank Source

1. Formal announcements
2. Newspaper
2. Board meetings
3. Secret tips from leaders in the community
0. Information from paraprofessionals

Community people have definite ideas about how these information systems can be improved:

Rank Method of Improvement

1. Coordinated presentations
2. Involving community people in developing the information mechanisms
3. Washington should exert influence and monitor local efforts
3. More detailed articles explaining programs, goals, and objectives in all news media
3. Establishing better communication system
3. Including teachers (union and nonunion) and as many community groups as possible

To the question about the appropriateness of citizen watchdog groups in the area, only three Task Force members responded positively. All the rest believed that a coordinating group rather than a watchdog one was required to get the information to the people. Of those three from areas with watchdog groups, one noted that one of these groups seemed to be part of the establishment. One group was rated effective; the other, very effective. This very effective group was described as a bilingual curriculum committee in a northeastern city.

The Information Committee should:

Rank Method

1. Package its findings in Spanish and English

2. Develop a concise, easy-to-read, attractive newsletter for local people

3. Prepare film strips, TV presentation tapes, newsletter, and bulletins

4. Circulate findings to other task forces contacting teachers, etc., and other groups

III. Training Questionnaire: Results

The questionnaire on the training needs offered a rich potential source of information for a person interested in the impact of the experience of being a part of the Community Task Force as well as a picture of local participants' training needs. The information, therefore, is of genuine value to those who would seek to mobilize a community group for a nation-wide effort in the future.

On the Federal level, respondents felt they would like to ask about:

Choice-Training Area

1. Educational technology

2. Drug education

3. New programs

4. New careers terminology

5. Long-range planning and plans

6. Current legislation

7. Funding

In ranking the five areas in which Task Force members felt that help is needed, these results were obtained:

Choice-Area for Training

1. Defining objectives and goals

2. Developing strategies

3. Learning what other task forces are currently doing

4. Developing political strategies (coalition building)

5. Following up the meetings of the Community Task Force

It was proposed that to train a national task force, these steps might be taken:

1. Interview some local people in communities where Federal programs have been instituted. Learn why they mistrust Federal programs and work to eliminate the elements in the guidelines which cause mistrust.

2. Encourage and develop honest problemsolving and priority-setting sessions.

3. Place more emphasis on the involvement of Mexican American, Puerto Rican and other Spanish-speaking minorities on the Task Force.

Participants felt that on the local level, community folk needed training in:

Importance--Area of Training for Local Areas

1. Identifying their basic constituencies

2. Meeting strategies

3. Establishing goals and objectives

4. Improving and/or establishing a communications network

Public relations

Information about new education programs

Information on monitoring, evaluating present program

How to develop accountability

New career development

Uses of multimedia for learning

New program

Several respondents checked each and every area suggesting that no one was more important than the others to them and that all of the areas were conceived of as part of a whole fabric.

Interestingly enough, respondents thought that they would like to see an interesting combination of political and substantive training:

Political--

Learning how not to be bought off by the system

Learning how Washington really works

Substantive--

Information models

Evaluation

Comprehensive planning

Training for Local Folk

For Office of Education personnel, community folk recommended:

1. More chances for Washington people to visit the local communities
2. Greater political knowledge in order to be able to grasp dynamics of ethnic and minority communities, and
3. Skills in evaluation of reports and the assessment of local claims

In order to accomplish these recommended objectives, it would be necessary for the Office of Education structure to be altered to:

1. Permit wider visitation, and
2. Broaden and extend communication

In every instance, the recommendation was for improved communications and information systems and, in one case, for redistribution of power to permit regional offices to make decisions (with sign-off and cut-off authority for local situations).

With respect to a training technique, it was recommended that:

1. There be local small-group sessions in problemsolving, goal setting, and two-way discussions, and that

2. There be weekend trips with community and Office of Education people learning side-by-side.

The responses related to the training process offer still another view of what is needed both for successful functioning of community people on the local level and for successful functioning on the national level.

Summary: They Do Know What They Need

While the practice of polling group members is by no means a new one, polling of the National Community Task Force provided a very interesting means for gaining new information and data about the needs and aspirations of community people. The numbers polled in this case were not large enough to be statistically significant, but the figures and the facts developed are interesting. These figures offer a clue to the fact that community people have a sense of what they need:

> "More fatback (resource food information), more greenback (more money for programs), and a whole lot of us technocrats—off their backs."

Or, to express it another way, "more people working with them, rather than for and on them."

QUESTIONNAIRE

I. FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force cannot recommend everything to everybody. Its recommendations should be addressed to:

Rank	Yes	No
☐ Office of Education	☐	☐
☐ Local school districts	☐	☐
☐ Inservice teacher training institutes	☐	☐

	Yes	No
☐ State school officers	☐	☐
☐ Administrators	☐	☐
☐ Schools of education	☐	☐
☐ Teachers	☐	☐
☐ Community people	☐	☐
☐ Others (please specify)		

Now rate these groups on a scale 1-7 based on the group to whom recommendations should be addressed. The recommendations to the Office of Education should cover:

	Yes	No
☐ Funding	☐	☐
☐ Making information available	☐	☐
☐ Guidelines	☐	☐
☐ Legislation sought	☐	☐
☐ Community Task Force experiences	☐	☐
☐ Ways to monitor community involvement and participation	☐	☐
☐ Better definitions and wider use of community participation models	☐	☐
☐ Other (please specify)		

What would you recommend in each of these areas for OE?

What kind of documentation or argument should support your recommendation?

Who would prepare this material?

Would you be willing to read and review this material?

☐ Yes ☐ No

*For local school districts your recommendations would be in the area of

Rank	Yes	No
☐ Funding	☐	☐
☐ Making information available	☐	☐
☐ Guidelines	☐	☐
☐ Notices	☐	☐
☐ Community Task Force	☐	☐
☐ Community involvement models	☐	☐
☐ Other (please specify)		

*Rank order these from 1 to 4 (1 being the most important in your opinion).

*Repeat these questions for teacher training institutes, State school officers, administrators, schools of education, and community people.

What are your specific recommendations for school districts?

What kind of documentation or argument should support your recommendation?

Which task force would in your opinion have the most similar recommendations to that of the Community Task Force?

- ☐ Chief State School Officers
- ☐ Administration and Supervision
- ☐ Teachers
- ☐ Higher Education
- ☐ Basic Studies

Have you thought what people you know in your own community would wish to be recommended?

Any further comments:

II. Information

Since knowledge is power . . . it must be recognized that what the information community groups possess, or have access to, will often determine how effectively they can participate in school affairs.

What information would you wish to possess about OE?

*Rank order	Yes	No
☐ Areas of responsibility	☐	☐
☐ New programs	☐	☐
☐ Leadership--name of person in charge	☐	☐
☐ Level of funding	☐	☐
☐ Funding schedule	☐	☐
☐ Proposal requirements	☐	☐
☐ Summary reports of programs	☐	☐
☐ Other (please specify)	☐	☐

What information would you wish from your regional area?

Rank areas of responsibility

- ☐ New programs
- ☐ Leadership--name of person in charge

*Rank order these from 1 to 4 (1 being the most important in your opinion).

- ☐ Level of funding
- ☐ Funding schedule
- ☐ Proposal requirements
- ☐ Summary reports of programs
- ☐ Other (please specify)

What information on the local level is necessary for you and your friends and neighbors?

Rank areas of responsibility

- ☐ New programs
- ☐ Leadership--name of person in charge
- ☐ Level of funding
- ☐ Funding schedule
- ☐ Proposal requirements
- ☐ Summary reports of programs
- ☐ Other (please specify)

What Federal program information do you find hardest to get at your local level?

What kind of Federal program information do you find the easiest to get?

What mechanisms are used in your local area to provide citizens with basic information about school programs?

How could these mechanisms be improved?

Is there a citizens' watchdog committee on schools in your area?
☐ Yes ☐ No Who makes up this committee?

How effective is this group?

- ☐ Very effective
- ☐ Effective
- ☐ Seems part of the establishment
- ☐ Does not deal with problems of the poor, the minorities, and dispossessed
- ☐ Ineffective

What are the most popular sources of information for local groups?

- ☐ Board meetings
- ☐ Announcements
- ☐ Newspapers
- ☐ Secret tips from teachers
- ☐ Information from paraprofessionals

How should the findings of the Information Subcommittee be packaged for distribution? Your suggestion:

Comments:

III. Training

To prepare any effective training program, trainers and leaders need to know what people know and need to learn to do a good job. From your experiences to date on the Task Force, you would like to know more about--

Rank		Yes	No
	☐ Current legislation	☐	☐
	☐ Educational technology	☐	☐
	☐ Drug education	☐	☐
	☐ New careers technology	☐	☐
	☐ New programs	☐	☐
	☐ Long-range plans and planning	☐	☐
	☐ Funding levels	☐	☐
	☐ Other (please specify)		

Rank from 1 to 4 the four areas you think most important to operate on the Task Force. You need help in:

☐ Defining objectives and goals
☐ Developing strategies
☐ Learning what other task forces are doing
☐ Developing coalitions
☐ Following the meetings of task forces
☐ More time outside, meeting to read minutes, etc.
☐ Other (please specify)

If you could make one recommendation for training for participation on the Task Force, this recommendation would include:

On the local level, you think community folk need training in:

Rank		Yes	No
	☐ Public relations	☐	☐
	☐ Meeting strategies	☐	☐
	☐ Identifying their basic constituencies	☐	☐
	☐ Information about new educational programs	☐	☐
	☐ Information on monitoring/evaluating present programs	☐	☐
	☐ How to develop accountability systems	☐	☐

	Yes	No
☐ Improving and/or establishing a communications network	☐	☐

Questionnaire Training

	Yes	No
☐ Establish goals and objectives	☐	☐
☐ New career development	☐	☐
☐ Uses of multimedia for learning	☐	☐
☐ New programs	☐	☐
☐ Other (please specify)		

Please rank these choices from 1 to 6:

If you had your way, describe the kind of training you would like to see for local folk.

What kind of training do you think OE personnel need for effective work with the local community folk?

How would OE have to alter its structure and practices in order to afford effective training along these lines?

What training technique have you found best suited the needs of local community program and training groups?

What training do you feel that the Task Force and local community groups might want to hear about?

Any further comments:

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